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IDENTIFIERS Town Meetings

ABSTRACT

The materials presented here are designed to provide background information and stimulate discussion of bilingual education in a televised town meeting held on May 9, 1996 in Sacramento, California. The meeting, one of a series, is intended as a forum for California high school students, educators, and legislators to engage in dialogue about problems in bilingual education and the role of public policy in addressing them. The materials include essays, documents produced by public and private agencies, legislative texts and excerpts, policy statements, and newspaper and journal articles on two general topics: the relationship of language and culture, particularly in bilingual education, and bilingual education policy and practice. For each topic area, a series of study questions is included. (MSE)

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A Town Hall Meeting***Literacy and Culture:******The Problems and Promises
of Bilingual Education***

California State Capitol
May, 1996

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**The
LegiSchool
Project**

This event is a production of the LegiSchool Project: an educational collaboration
between the California State Legislature and California State University.

A Town Hall Meeting

Literacy and Culture:

The Problems and Promises of Bilingual Education

California State Capitol
May, 1996



This event is a production of the LegiSchool Project: an educational collaboration between the California State Legislature and California State University.

Dear Town Hall Meeting Participants,

On May 9, 1996, the LegiSchool Project will conduct the fourth in a series of televised, Town Hall Meetings from the State Capitol in Sacramento. Once again, the meeting will be broadcast live via cable by the California Channel.

The purpose of these meetings is to provide a forum in which California high school students, educators, and legislators can engage in face-to-face dialogue about problems of mutual interest. The topic for this Town Hall Meeting is, *Literacy and Culture: The Problems and Promises of Bilingual Education*. An overview of the topic appears on the following page.

Participants at this event include approximately 60 students from two Sacramento area high school government classes who will be seated in one of the large hearing rooms at the Capitol. Six students will sit at the dais in front, along with the legislators from both the Senate and the Assembly. Several classes watching from remote sites will be connected to us by telephone so that they, too, can ask questions of the panelists.

The moderator, Barbara Arnstine from CSUS, will lead a discussion among the panelists focusing on the issues presented in this packet. Later in the meeting, she will take questions from the students seated in the audience and then from students in the remote sites.

The background material, articles, and critical thinking questions included in this packet are designed to help the participants prepare for the meeting. We would like to encourage those of you who are interested in viewing the Town Hall Meeting to read the materials and discuss the questions before the event takes place on May 9th.

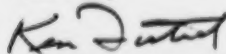
If you would like a copy of the Town Hall Meeting or want more information about the LegiSchool Project, call our educator's hotline at 800-321-1966 or write to us at:

The LegiSchool Project

c/o Center for California Studies
California State University
6000 J Street
Sacramento, 95819-6081

We look forward to hearing from you and hope you enjoy the Town Hall Meeting.

Sincerely,



Ken Futernick, Ph.D.
Project Director

LITERACY AND CULTURE: THE PROBLEMS AND PROMISES OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

We want the future to hold good jobs, loving families and citizen participation for all our children. And we know that in this society, being literate and speaking English will help lead to that future. We also know that many students talk with their families about love, work, and respect in a language other than English -- one their family brought to this country.

Can students achieve this vision of the future when they speak one language at home and another in school? Will keeping the native language alive help or hinder the student who is learning English? These are the questions that are part of the debate over bilingual education, and they are questions to be discussed at our Town Hall Meeting.

As we look at past and proposed legislation on bilingual education, we find that some legislators support its continuance in our schools, while others think it should be discontinued in favor of an English-language-only approach. Both sides of this issue will be examined as we look at some of the new bills presented on bilingual education. Some of the questions we will consider are:

- Does bilingual education work? Who says so and who says it doesn't?
- Does bilingual education conflict with other important school aims?
- What is the schools' role in preserving the languages and cultures of non English speaking students?
- Is it possible to be against bilingual education but in support of foreign language requirements for high school graduation?
- Can we keep our connections to the past and to our culture if we can no longer speak our native language?

The LegiSchool Project

LITERACY AND CULTURE: THE PROBLEMS AND PROMISES OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Dr. Ken Futernick, Project Director

Dr. Barbara Arnstine, Moderator & Editor

Dr. Tim Hodson, Project Administration

Cindy Le Fevre, M.A., Research & Assistant Editor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Part I: Language and Culture	
Overview.....	1
You Can't Learn What You Can't Understand.....	2
SB 33: The Language Minority Education Act.....	6
AB 3017: Common Language of the State: English.....	9
Gingrich Assails American Bilingualism as Dangerous.....	12
U.S. Has Debate Over Bilingual Ed Backwards.....	14
Judge: Mom's Spanish is Child Abuse.....	16
Bilingual Education Under Challenge as Costly Error.....	17
A Look at Where the Money Goes in Public School.....	18
Defending the State's Bilingual Education.....	21
Young English-Speakers Flee Quebec.....	23
Language Bond.....	25
The joy in sharing language and culture.....	26
Study Questions.....	28
 Part II: Bilingual Education Policy and Practice	
Overview.....	29
What We Can Learn from Multicultural Education Research.....	31
California Teachers' Association Bilingual Policy.....	39
Shaping Instruction to Promote the Success of Language	
Minority Students.....	40
Battle Heats Up Over Bilingual Education.....	44
Bilingual Education Issue: Sacramento Gets Hot Potato.....	50
California State Board of Education Policy.....	51
AB 955: Bilingual Education.....	54
AB 2310: Bilingual Education.....	56

Table of Contents (cont.)

Page

AB 1041: Bilingual Education.....	59
80 Students Stay Out of School in Latino Boycott.....	62
Spanish Program for Children Speaks Volumes.....	64
Panel Wants to Mute Bilingual Program at Douglass Jr. High.....	65
State Board Oks English-Only Teaching in Westminster.....	68
Applied Linguistics: For Immigrant Students, Bilingual Program is a Path to Success.....	69
Study Questions.....	73

LITERACY AND CULTURE: THE PROBLEMS AND PROMISES OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

PART I: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Overview

Bilingual education isn't just about teaching little kids from other countries how to speak English. It is also about democracy, equal opportunity and immigration to this country. It is most particularly about the relation between language and culture, about the way we speak and what our values are.

The conflict between two visions of the role of language and its contribution to our public and private life is seen in the difference between two pieces of legislation, SB 33 (Mello), the California Language Minority Education Act, and AB 3017 (Hoge), Common Language of the State: English. The first three readings give a summary of the case for bilingual education funding, the digest of SB 33, The Language Minority Education Act, and the digest of AB 3017, a commitment to the public use of English. As you look at these readings, you can see that both sides are quite serious about the importance of language in our educational and social development, and both recognize the importance of the English language for all California students. Although these bills have not been voted into action, they help us to see the larger issues involved in the debate over bilingual education.

However, beyond the recognition of the importance of language, there are serious differences. One, AB 3017, says that although the public language must be English, this is not to infringe on the rights of people to use other languages privately, in their own homes. But the California Association for Bilingual Education supported SB 33 because "bilingual education values the children's home language and helps involve their parents in the schooling of their children." How our public and our private lives influence one another is important here, and this importance is seen in the articles that follow. But before you go to those

articles, spend some time considering the differences between the first two approaches and what the legislation advocates.

SB 33 and AB 3017 are really part of a larger debate that citizens have about the role of language in our lives. Some citizens see the use of a language other than English as an insult and a threat to our common values and way of life. Others see bilinguality as enhanced job opportunity and the wave of the future. Their stories and their differences are presented in the rest of the articles in this section.

"YOU CAN'T LEARN WHAT YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND": EDUCATING CALIFORNIA'S ENGLISH LEARNERS

THE CASE FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION FUNDING AND SB33 (MELLO): THE LANGUAGE MINORITY EDUCATION ACT

By California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)
California Rural Legal Assistance
Bilingual Community Coalition

Section 1: Executive Summary – Bilingual Limbo

California faces a crisis: 1.7 million students (34%) in our public schools cannot understand what is being taught in their classrooms. These children come from homes where a language other than English (principally Spanish) is spoken. In many schools, English learners outnumber native English speakers, especially in the early grades. We know that everyone benefits when children with limited English-language skills become proficient in English and develop the ability to master educational skills. Bilingual education overcomes the language barrier so that students can succeed. Bilingual instruction accelerates English-learning. Without bilingual education, language minority students are destined to fail, because they cannot learn what they cannot understand.

Economic, legal, moral, social and educational imperatives necessitate bilingual education.

Bilingual education in California has treaded water for five years because the state hasn't committed itself again to the wisdom of teaching students English and educating them in their native languages at the same time. Research has shown that bilingual education works and is cost-effective. However, California does not have a bilingual education state authorization; it expired in 1987 and Gov. Wilson vetoed legislation to reauthorize it in 1992. Because federal law requires some form of special instruction to students who do not speak English, bilingual education in California didn't die. It lives inconsistently, succeeding here but lacking support there.

We are required by federal law to provide meaningful education to students with limited English. Federal case law requires schools to provide understandable instruction for each of the 100 language groups represented in our school population -- but provides no guidelines for meeting that mandate. SB 33 (Mello), the California Language Minority Education Act, provides local policymakers with reasonable guidelines and flexibility to meet federal mandates by crafting appropriate programs based on the number of students within a language group. The measure provides guidelines for model programs, and will lead to effective instruction for all our students.

Essentially, bilingual education has two big problems. The lack of state legislation leading to inequalities at the local level, and there aren't enough bilingual teachers to go around. **SB 33 reauthorizes bilingual education, sets guidelines and triggers for model programs, and ensures a level playing field so these children can succeed.**

Section 2: The Need for Bilingual Education

English-learning students need teachers, instructional aides, and materials they can understand. Bilingual education provides "native language" instruction while the child learns English, ensuring that these children do not fall behind because they don't speak English. It allows them to keep pace with their peers in learning key subject matter while acquiring English.

Bilingual education values the children's home language and helps involve their parents in the schooling of their children. Parents are more aware of their children's work and are more likely to help their children and to make sure that homework is completed. Without bilingual education, these children are estranged from their parents, and separated from the family support that breeds success. Cut off from their families and histories, these children often turn to other networks that reward negative behavior.

Section 3: California's Public School Students

More than one-third of our public school students speak a language other than English at home. In the last five years, the growth of these "language minority" students was four times enrollment growth for the state as a whole. The California Department of Education has estimated that in 1993, more than 1.7 million (34%) of the state's approximately 5 million students were English-learners. The overwhelming majority (77%) are Spanish-speakers, but significant proportions also speak Vietnamese, Southeast Asian languages, Armenian, Russian, and more than 90 other languages. The vast majority of these students attend public schools in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Ana, Long Beach and Fresno. Many smaller rural school districts have majorities of English-learning students. English-learning children are concentrated in the earlier grades. In many districts, including Los Angeles, the majority of children in grades K-6 are English-learners. In many counties and school districts, the proportion of children who come from a home where a language other than English is spoken is even higher. In most of the large urban school districts, and scores of rural ones as well, bilingual education should not be a special program for students considered to have a "language deficiency." It must be the centerpiece of any effective education.

English-Learners in California:

Los Angeles County	493,859
Orange County	109,526
San Diego	76,652
Santa Clara	47,073
Fresno	39,544
San Bernardino	39,595
Riverside	39,443
Alameda	30,810
San Joaquin	22,533
Ventura	23,018
All others	229,766
Los Angeles Unified School District (K-12)	279,899



(Source: California State Department of Education)

Section 4: Preparing our Youth for the Global Economy

The future success of California's economy and society is tied to effective education for language minority children. They can be our

greatest asset in global economic competition, or our greatest liability in a state tearing itself apart. Bilingual education is key to their and our economic future. These children are the workforce and the citizenry of the future. Yet they currently drop out of school at rates far higher than the norm. In the workplace, lack of English skills is the main obstacle to finding and holding a job. Unable to compete, many also drop out of society, turning often to drugs, crime and gangs. Many factors contribute to this failure. But inability to understand what's being taught in the classroom can lead only to failure. These children certainly cannot learn what they can't understand.

Today's global economy demands that we develop a multilingual workforce. The Pacific Rim and Latin America hold the greatest potential as future trading partners. A few years ago, Pepsi-Cola's marketing plan in Southeast Asia failed miserably because it lacked qualified translators. Its slogan "Come Alive" was erroneously translated in Thai as "It raises your ancestors from the dead." Chevrolet's car, the Nova, didn't sell in Latin American countries, because "no va" in Spanish means "it doesn't go." California's children speak the languages we need to communicate with our trading partners: Spanish, Japanese, and other Asian and European languages. The languages they bring to the school are precisely those needed to effectively communicate with the countries and peoples crucial to future economic success. Bilingual education preserves this tremendous economic asset, and helps to convey these languages, and the cultural understanding necessary for successful trade, to native English-speakers. We need to teach English to LEP children, and also teach second languages to monolingual English-speakers.

Ironically, we strip non-English-speakers of their primary languages and then re-teach those same languages at the secondary level. For decades these children have been regarded as having a "language deficiency." We strip them of their native language and replace it with monolingual English. Today we realize that we all need to develop multilingual skills -- that we should "add" English to these students' native languages, and "add" a second language to our own native English.

California's children of immigrants are a vital resource for future economic success. Those who fear that immigrant languages and cultures will harm U.S. English have undercut effective bilingual programs at every turn. These monolingual advocates often resent the presence of immigrants and cling to the notion that only English should be spoken in the United States. That view ignores the global economic challenge facing California -- a challenge that requires a multilingual workforce.

SB 33: THE LANGUAGE MINORITY EDUCATION ACT

Author: Mello

Passed by Legislature August 29, 1994

vetoed by Governor September 30, 1994

Died on file November 30, 1994

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

(1) Existing law, which is presently inoperative, establishes the Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act of 1976 and specifies that the purposes of the act are to require school districts to offer bilingual learning opportunities to each pupil of limited English proficiency enrolled in the public schools, and to provide adequate supplemental financial support to achieve that goal.

This bill would repeal that program and instead would enact the California Language Minority Education Act. The bill would declare that the purpose of the act is to require all school districts to offer specialized instructional programs or services, or both, to each identified language minority pupil either through a comprehensive program of instruction or through the provision of instructional support services.

This bill would require a school district to conduct an annual census of language minority pupils not later than March 1. That census, conducted pursuant to directives prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, would identify all language minority pupils enrolled in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, and would categorize pupils counted in the census as English learners or fluent-English-proficient pupils.

This bill would require that an assessment of the English language proficiency of each previously untested language minority pupil be conducted within 30 days of enrollment of that pupil.

This bill would require that parents or guardians of language minority pupils be informed of the results of that assessment, and of the program or programs to be offered, within 15 days of the assessment. The bill would require that the school take specified affirmative steps to obtain the parent's or guardian's consent for the pupil to participate in a program, and would provide for alternative placement if the parent or guardian does not so consent.

This bill would require each school maintaining kindergarten or grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to offer at each grade level in the school at least one comprehensive program, as specified, if the census indicates that the school has a significant concentration of English learners, as specified. The bill would authorize schools to obtain a waiver of that requirement under specified conditions.

This bill would authorize the approval of alternative programs for schools that meet specified criteria.

This bill would require full disclosure of all program options given to parents or guardians.

This bill would require that identified English learners remain in required comprehensive programs and instructional support services for a period not to exceed 4 years as long as those programs are educationally beneficial to the pupil and agreed to by the parent or guardian in specified cases. The bill would provide that participation in a program for an individual pupil is voluntary.

This bill would provide for 2 comprehensive multiyear programs for English learners. The bilingual education program would include daily lessons in English language development, the core curriculum through instruction in the primary language of the pupil, self-concept, self-identity, and crosscultural knowledge and abilities and a home-school collaboration component. The program of specially designed academic instruction would include daily lessons in English language development, the core curriculum through English-based content instruction, self-concept, self-identity, and crosscultural knowledge and abilities, would have a home-school collaboration component and primary language support, and may include an extended-day language program.

This bill also would provide for a 2-way bilingual education program that would consist of a comprehensive multiyear program of instruction for all pupils, whether language minority pupils or native speakers of English, that would include second language development, primary language development, the core curriculum, development of self-concept, self-identity, and crosscultural knowledge and abilities, and a home-school collaboration component.

This bill would require that teachers in comprehensive programs be authorized by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, as specified.

This bill also would provide for various instructional support services, including an extended-day language program for supplementary instruction in the primary language of the English learner that also would be open to all pupils in the school regardless of primary language, individual support services that would provide regularly scheduled instruction of English language development, and home-school collaboration, as defined.

This bill would require each school that enrolls more than 20 English learners from any one or more combinations of primary language groups to establish a parental school site bilingual education advisory committee, as specified. The bill would require that the school solicit the advice of the committee on certain issues related to the comprehensive programs and services offered by the school.

This bill also would require the establishment of a parental district-level bilingual education advisory committee in each district that enrolls more than 50 English learners from any one or a combination of any primary language groups, as specified.

This bill would require that school districts take appropriate steps to integrate language minority pupils with native speakers of English without denying English learners access to the core curriculum, as defined, or opportunities for English language development in classes designed especially for second language learners.

This bill would require that all school districts that are required to offer one or more comprehensive programs be monitored by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, as specified.

This bill would require that pupil progress in English language development be determined by using either the statewide pupil assessment program examinations or another standardized test, as specified.

This bill would require the superintendent to review the results of the census annually and to take corrective action where the census has been taken incorrectly.

To the extent that programs of bilingual education, as affected by the provisions of this bill, exceed the minimum program and service level required by federal law, this bill would create a state-mandated local program.

This bill would state the intent of the Legislature that funding for school districts that implement the program for the 1994-95 fiscal year come from funds appropriated for economic impact aid and from Chapter 1 of the federal Education Consolidation and Improvement Act in the Budget Act of 1994 and that funding for the State Department of Education for its costs in implementing the program be appropriated in the annual Budget Act.

(2) Existing law provides that the bilingual education program shall sunset on June 30, 1987.

This bill would repeal that provision.

(3) This bill would make various conforming changes to existing law.

(4) Existing law requires that an individualized education program team conduct meetings to develop, review, or revise the individualized education program of an individual with exceptional needs. Under existing law, that team consists of the pupil's present teacher, one or both of the pupil's parents, or a representative selected by the parents, or both, and a representative other than the pupil's teacher.

This bill would add qualified teachers of English learners to the category of persons who may serve on an individualized education program team as a representative other than the pupil's teacher.

(5) Existing law requires that each individual with exceptional needs have an individualized education program, that, among other things, when appropriate, includes linguistically appropriate goals, objectives, programs, and services.

This bill would include in those goals, objectives, programs, and services, instruction in the primary language of a pupil that has been identified as an English learner pursuant to the California Language Minority Education Act.

(6) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates which do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this bill contains costs mandated by the state that are not otherwise provided for in this bill, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to those statutory procedures and, if the statewide cost does not exceed \$1,000,000, shall be made from the State Mandates Claims Fund.

A.B. No. 3017: Common language of the state: English

INTRODUCED 02/23/96 BY Assembly Member Hoge

Referred to Coms. on C.P., G.E. & E.D. and ED on March 25, 1996

An act to add Division 3.3 (commencing with Section 700) to Title 1 of the Government Code, relating to English as the common language of the state.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 3017, as introduced, Hoge. Common language of the state: English.

(1) The California Constitution provides that English is the official language of this state and requires the Legislature to enforce this provision by appropriate legislation.

This bill would recognize English as the common language of the state and the language of official documents and records and official public meetings of state agencies. This bill would permit the use of a language other than the common language, as specified. This bill would require a state agency to delineate as a separate line item in its budget all costs related to the preparation, translation, printing, and recording of documents, records, brochures, pamphlets, flyers, or other informational materials in languages other than the common language.

(2) Existing federal and state law provides for bilingual instruction by various public educational institutions in the state, subject to specified criteria.

This bill would require that, notwithstanding any other provision of state law, and to the extent not in conflict with federal law, no public educational institution in the state may offer certain types of bilingual instruction to any individual for a period exceeding 2 years. By requiring a higher level of service of local educational agencies, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(3) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

This bill would provide that its provisions are severable.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

Excerpt from Bill Text

Section 1. Division 3.3 (commencing with Section 700) is added to Title 1 of the Government Code, to read:

DIVISION 3.3. ENGLISH AS THE COMMON LANGUAGE OF THE STATE

700. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the following:

(a) By sharing a common language, America's immigrants built a new nation and contributed their diverse cultures.

(b) This state has been enriched by its diversity, and the government should always take steps to promote the dignity of all the heritages that form our society.

(c) Many languages are represented in this state, and language has the power to unite people of differing backgrounds and heritages.

(d) English is the nation's single, shared language and the one language that crosses all ethnic, racial, cultural, nationality, and religious lines and allows diverse Americans to share their various backgrounds.

(e) Full political, economic, and social empowerment depends to a large extent upon proficiency in the common language and lack of proficiency in the common language condemns people to a permanent second-class status behind a language barrier.

(f) Knowledge of the common language is essential to the democratic processes of government and the full exercise of constitutional freedoms, informed and knowledgeable empowerment as voters, citizen checks against government abuses, and individual prosperity and independence.

(g) The use of a common language as the language of public record in no way infringes upon the rights of citizens to exercise the use of a primary language of their choice for private conduct.

(h) The absence of a recognized common language among a diverse people results in segregation along language lines and places at great disadvantage individuals who are of limited proficiency in English.

(i) It is a purpose of this division to recognize the government's affirmative responsibility to encourage and ensure greater opportunities for individuals to learn the common language, as recognized by this division.

(j) It is a purpose of this division to establish a uniform policy for a means of access to public documents and communications in the state and thereby ensure fair, consistent, and equal practices throughout this state when it comes to providing services.

GINGRICH ASSAILS AMERICAN BILINGUALISM AS 'DANGEROUS';
SPEAKER CITES CANADA AS EXAMPLE OF
HOW DIFFERENCES SPLIT A NATION.
CRITICS SAY HIS CALL FOR ENGLISH AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE WILL
HURT IMMIGRANTS

By Elizabeth Shogren, Times Staff Writer
Los Angeles Times, October 31, 1995
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The vote in Quebec on secession from Canada should stand as a clear warning to Americans about the threat that bilingualism poses to unity in the United States, House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) said Monday.

"Allowing bilingualism to continue to grow is very dangerous," Gingrich said after addressing a technology and business forum at Georgia Tech in Atlanta. "We should insist on English as a common language. . . . That's what binds us together."

Clinton Administration officials took issue with Gingrich's statement.

"The true bonds are our shared values of freedom, democracy, and human rights. That is truly the glue that helps people stick together."

"I think comparing (bilingualism) in Canada and the United States is like comparing apples and oranges," said Dang Pham, acting director of the Education Department's Office of Bilingual Education. Pham stressed

that while Canada has two official languages, English is the one national language of the United States.

"Besides, in the United States, language is not the true bond," Pham said. "The true bonds are our shared values of freedom, democracy and human rights. That is truly the glue that helps people stick together."

"With all the divisive forces tearing at our country, we need the glue of language to help hold us together."

Gingrich said Congress probably will vote on the measure next year that would make English the official language of the United States.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-Kan.) also has embraced the idea of making English the official language of the country.

"With all the divisive forces tearing at our country, we need the glue of language to help hold us together," Dole said in a Labor Day speech to the

American Legion in Indianapolis. "If we want to ensure that all our children have the same opportunities in life, alternative language education should stop and English should be acknowledged once and for all as the official language of the United States."

The Administration, however, has argued that English already operates as the official language of the United States and it has been critical of congressional attempts to curtail bilingual education.

"Obviously English is our national language," Education Secretary Richard W. Riley said about the congressional measures. "New immigrants are clamoring to learn it as fast as they can. All over America, people are standing in lines and placing their names on waiting lists to take English and literacy classes."

The average time non-English-speaking children spend in federally funded bilingual education classes is 2.7 years, according to the Education Department. Currently, about 325,000 of the 2.7 million students who are limited in their English proficiency across the country are in federally funded bilingual education classes.

"This is making a mountain out of a molehill to somehow imply that English is in danger."

More than 20% of the almost 6 million students in California's schools

have limited English proficiency. Most of the funding to teach students with limited English proficiency comes from state and local governments.

"It would be sheer folly to deny millions of schoolchildren the opportunity to learn English at a time when the need is greatest," Riley said. "Unfortunately, these efforts to make English the 'official' language and to eliminate programs that teach English are more about politics than improving education."

Advocates for immigrants have accused Gingrich and other GOP lawmakers who support the efforts to restrict bilingual education and make English the official language of fanning the flames of divisiveness.

"We already have a common language and it is English. No one disputes that. This is making a mountain out of a molehill to somehow imply that English is in danger," said Karen Hanson, a policy analyst for the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic civil rights organization that lobbies Congress on issues that affect immigrants. "It's political pandering to those people who feel uneasy about the current state of immigration in this country. It is capitalizing on some of the anti-immigrant sentiment in the country."

Measures that would either prevent federal funding for bilingual education or make English the official language of the United States government have been introduced in Congress. Hearings on the bills are now under way.

The congressional measure that has gathered the most support is probably a bill sponsored by Rep. Bill Emerson (R-Mo.) that would declare English the official language of the federal government and ban the use of tax dollars to print forms in languages other than English. Emerson's office said that the legislation has 189 co-sponsors.

Another measure would require all federal publications to be printed in English, abolish the federal Office of Bilingual Education and prohibit the use of languages other than English in citizenship ceremonies.

U.S. HAS DEBATE OVER BILINGUAL ED BACKWARDS

The Sacramento Bee - November 7, 1995
by Daniel Shanahan Jr.

My wife is Czech. I am American. We live in France. Just going on 4, our son is a functional trilingual.

Czech is Gabriel's first language and since I don't speak Czech, there are times when I'd like to know what he and his mother are talking about. But then there are probably times when it's just as well that I don't. Gabriel and I speak English together. At the local pre-school he speaks French--better and better, the teacher tells us, as time goes on.

Recently, I took Gabriel to the States for three weeks, his first trip to an English-speaking country. I was struck by how uniformly people greeted his multilingualism with admiration, even envy.

During the decade and a half I have been involved in international education, one truth about language in the world today has been pounded home to me: The world is going English. There is no danger of English disappearing from the face of Earth; it's changing that face.

**As you become fluent,
you learn how other
people think.**

That fact should tell us something fundamental about global economic competition and national security: If the world is going English, then it's also going bilingual because most of those people learning English already speak a native language of their own.

And as we all know, learning another language means a lot more than grammar and vocabulary. As you become fluent, you learn how other people think, how they negotiate, what they might be able to offer you and what they would be willing to fight for.

In other words, millions of people learn not just how to speak English, but how to understand - and, perhaps, out-think, out-smart and generally out-do those who speak it as our native tongue.

That being the case, why is the political debate on bilingualism in the United States centered on preventing children from getting an education in two languages? What we ought to be debating, and with the greatest urgency, is how

early we can begin teaching second languages to all our children, how many languages we should require for a college degree and how to take the millions of speakers of other languages in American schools and make them resources for those who speak only English.

The U.S. debate about bilingual education doesn't even put the cart before the horse; in today's world, it's an argument based on pre-wheel technology.

The debate over bilingual education is a pointless digression with potentially tragic consequences. It ignores the simple fact that multilingualism gives a competitive edge every bit as important as computer technology, advanced military weaponry or good business sense. In

fact, it is good business sense.

One of my students recently told me, "French corporations just aren't going to look at you unless you have English, German and one other language." Can Americans, even at top management schools, compete on that playing field? Are we planting the seeds early enough to hope for similar qualifications among our university graduates in any field? The answer has to be a resounding no, non, nyet, nein or ne. The U.S. debate about bilingual education doesn't even put the cart before the horse; in today's world, it's an argument based on prewheel technology.

Our concern should be providing all Americans with the best tools for competing in the real world. It should be about discovering the world, not withdrawing from it. If we

don't face that, we will be robbing our children of the opportunity to compete and communicate in a globalized environment. Without that opportunity, they will feel less and less at home in the world.

Sure, people everywhere may eventually speak English. But our kids will begin to realize that's a disadvantage when everyone understands you, but you don't understand them. Give them that opportunity and our children will compete, negotiate and make peace well. They'll feel at home even when they're not, and they'll enjoy that feeling as much as they benefit from it. Ask my son. Choose your language.

Special to The Bee: Daniel Shanahan Jr., a graduate of Bishop Armstrong High School, California State University, Sacramento, and Stanford, teaches English at the Ecole Hautes Etudes Commerciales in France.

JUDGE: MOM'S SPANISH IS CHILD ABUSE

The Sacramento Bee - August 29, 1995
Amarillo, Texas; Associated Press
Reprinted with permission

A judge overseeing a child custody case told a woman that speaking only Spanish at home constituted abuse to her 5-year-old daughter.

State District Judge Samuel C. Kiser told Marta Laureano that she must speak English in conjunction with Spanish when talking to her daughter.

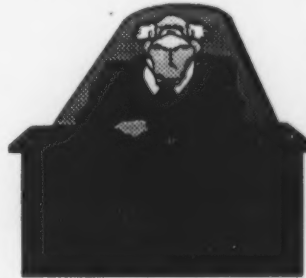
Language became an issue in the case when the girl's father, Timothy Garcia, who was seeking unsupervised visits with his daughter, claimed that the only English she was learning was what he taught her. Kiser granted the father's visitation request Aug. 16.

Laureano, who was born and raised in Mexico, speaks English fluently. She said she uses Spanish at home because she wants her daughter, who is in kindergarten, to grow up bilingual.

"I am giving her an advantage that not everybody has," she said.

Kiser doesn't see it that way. At a hearing this summer, the judge

equated lack of English proficiency with ignorance and abuse. "If she starts first grade with the other children and cannot even speak the language that the teachers and the other children speak, and she's a full-blood American citizen, you're abusing that child and you're relegating her to the position of a housemaid," Kiser said, according to a transcript of the hearing.



Angry Latino leaders say the judge overstepped his authority. Some teachers say the case illustrates misconceptions about bilingual education.

Ann Prichard, director of bilingual education for the Amarillo Independent School District, said teachers use the strengths of a child's native language to teach academic skills.

"It keeps them from falling behind," Prichard said. Kiser studied in South America as a college student and said he occasionally speaks Spanish to his children at the dinner table.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION UNDER CHALLENGE AS COSTLY ERROR

The Sacramento Bee - May 23, 1995
Associated Press, Reprinted with permission

Bilingual education, a cornerstone of California education for 14 years, is under pressure from critics who say it is a costly mistake.

"We have to be honest enough with one another to say, when something isn't working, it's time to re-examine it," said state Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin. "There has to be a point at which we bite the bullet and say, 'At least, they have to learn English.'" More than a third of the nation's non-English-speaking students live in California. The state spends about \$400 million to educate 1.2 million children who speak little or no English.

State policy adopted 14 years ago requires school districts, when possible, to teach non-English speakers in their native languages. Students learn English

for as little as 20 minutes a day and transfer into English-only classes in four to seven years.

Native-language supporters say the system keeps students from falling behind academically until they are ready for all-English classes. Those who favor immersing students in English say the other system hinders students from learning fluent English.

Ira Torres chose to enroll her son, Jorge, 5, in a program stressing English at Sun Valley's Glenwood School. She had watched her two sisters struggle with English as adults after spending their early school years in bilingual classes that emphasized Spanish.

"I did not want that to happen to my son," Torres said in Spanish. "We plan to stay here in this country so this is better for his future."

Eastin has asked the State Board of Education to increase flexibility for districts that want to use more English-language instruction. She also intends to crack down on those districts using the native-language model and not performing well.

She cited a 1993 report by a watchdog commission that blamed the state's policies for holding back thousands of students who should be learning English.

While the number of non-English-speaking children in California has more than doubled in the past decade, the number of students moving into English fluency has stagnated at about 60,000 a year, the watchdog group's report said.

"In the past, to challenge bilingual ed was to be considered anti-immigrant or racist," said Jorge's

teacher, Sally Peterson. "Now a lot of people are saying: 'What is bilingual ed? Is it working? Is there something wrong with it?'"

Eight years ago, Peterson formed the Learning English Advocates Drive, which

opposes the native-language approach.

However, criticism of bilingual education isn't entirely divorced from sentiment of the kind that led to passage of Proposition 187, which would deny most public services to illegal immigrants.

Stanley Diamond, who led the 1986 campaign to make English California's official language, said, "English as an official language, immigration reform and affirmative action are all converging emotionally in the minds of our people."

A LOOK AT WHERE THE MONEY GOES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Sacramento Bee, November 27, 1995
by Richard Rothstein



OUR political mood is influenced by widespread belief in failed public institutions, and in the case of public schools, few doubt that academic outcomes have deteriorated. Researchers, however, find that test scores of white public school students either have remained stable or improved slightly over the last quarter-century, while minority scores have improved greatly, narrowing the gap with whites.

Claims of "doubled school spending" are based on faulty accounting of inflation

When pressed, school critics acknowledge these realities, but insist that even

modest improvement is a sign of failure, in light of the vast resources committed. For the last three years, I've led a team of investigators digging into school district financial records around the country to determine the truth about growth in school spending. Our report, published by the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, shows that commonplace claims of "doubled school spending" are based on faulty accounting of inflation, which varies greatly in different sectors.

As most everyone is aware, medical care inflation has been faster than average, while inflation in many manufactured products has been slower (computers and VCRs, for example, have had price decreases). In the case of public schools,

inflation has been on the fast side. One reason: as women's professional opportunities in other fields opened, school districts had to increase starting salaries simply to attract the same quality of teacher as in earlier years. Per-pupil spending then went up without corresponding increase in resources provided to students. Schools had to overcome a 7 percent annual inflation rate from 1967 to 1991, while consumers saw average annual price increases of only 6 percent. Compounded over 25 years, this difference has big consequences.

Proper accounting of inflation in public education shows that per-pupil spending rose only about 60 percent from the mid-'60s to the early '90s. And because inflation was more rapid in Western states than nationwide, California's real per-pupil spending grew by less than 50 percent.

New money has mostly gone to special programs

This is still considerable. If schools weren't wasting money, shouldn't these new expenditures have produced more than modest academic gains? Yes, but only if the new investments had been made in regular academic programs.

Critics claim that the money instead has been poured into new bureaucracy. The data reveal, however, that this may not be the case. Instead, new money has

gone mostly for special programs that, though valuable, have little to do with academic achievement of regular students.

For example, in Los Angeles 42 percent of all new dollars from 1967-91 were spent for special education. Schools now care for and train severely disabled youngsters who in earlier years were placed in hospitals or nursed at home.

Thanks to modern medical technology, premature or low birth weight infants now survive with disabilities requiring special school care unneeded a quarter-century ago. We now also tailor individualized programs for children with disabilities such as autism or severe dyslexia. Before, these children were simply considered "slow" and dropped (or were pushed) out.

New special-education programs may be worthy and a credit to our values as a society. But it's not reasonable to make serious financial commitments to children with physical, emotional or mental disabilities only to conclude that the money was wasted because it didn't produce higher SAT scores for the college-bound.

In Los Angeles, another 11 percent of the new money went for expansion of school lunch and breakfast programs. Some may expect this new spending to pay off in higher test scores because better nourished children make better learners. But this ignores that children's poverty has increased and new spending may only offset, perhaps only partially, the more

poorly nourished condition in which children come to school. In 1970, 15 percent of American children came from families in poverty; in 1991, 21 percent did so (and in Los Angeles, it was 28 percent).

Ten percent of all new money in Los Angeles has gone into bilingual education (salary premiums to attract bilingual teachers, for example) as the non-English-speaking population of the district has burgeoned. Seven percent of new money went for busing (voluntary and mandatory) as part of the district's desegregation program and to relieve over-crowding at inner-city schools. Another 6 percent went into a variety of dropout prevention programs, such as schools for pregnant minors or alternative education for teenagers who work full time.

As a result, regular academic education (including teachers, textbooks, libraries and the like) by 1991 represented

only 51 percent of all L.A. school district spending, down from 87 percent in 1967. Los Angeles, faced with unusually rapid demographic change, is only slightly extreme in this regard: Nationwide, regular education declined from 80 percent to 59 percent of school resources.

Still, a smaller share of a larger whole can provide increases per pupil, and national spending for regular elementary and secondary education grew by about 28 percent (after inflation). Do modest improvements in outcomes justify this modest increase in spending? Perhaps so. At the least, it's a close call; unqualified indictments characteristically lodged against our public schools don't seem justified.

Special to The Bee

Richard Rothstein is a research associate at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. His full report on school spending, "Where's the Money Gone?", can be obtained by calling 1-800-EPI-4844.

DEFENDING THE STATE'S BILINGUAL EDUCATION

The Sacramento Bee - January 3, 1995
by William D. Dawson; Reprinted with Permission

THE BEE'S editorial "To reform bilingual education" (Dec. 27), urging revision of what it calls an "overly prescriptive policy" on bilingual education, does all parties a disservice. In addition to teaching English as effectively and efficiently as possible, the schools are required to ensure that students with a limited English proficiency (LEP) have an equal opportunity for academic achievement. Otherwise, research indicates that far too many of them will fall irretrievably behind their English-speaking counterparts.

The facts are in from dozens of school districts around the state: Programs that use the students' primary language for immediate and challenging academic work and that teach English in a systematic way lead to solid command of English and to grade-level academic performance. In most cases, English becomes the main language of instruction after two to three years, although the process of becoming fully proficient in the second language - to the point where no special services are required - ranges from five to seven years. During this time, some use of the home language is an important factor in ensuring grade-level or better linguistic and academic development.

The Department of Education recognizes that it is not possible to provide home language instruction in all cases, and parents always have the option of selecting alternative services. Our implementation of guidelines in this area acknowledges the lack of trained teachers and materials for languages such as Hmong, Cambodian and Lao. Numerous ways are available for school districts to operate alternative programs within the framework of current state and federal law.

THE BEE decried what it called an "overly prescriptive policy" that, in reality, has not been an unreasonable burden for most of the more than 500 school districts that have substantial numbers of LEP students. Most are already working to build their capacity to teach English and other academic subjects to more than 1.2 million LEP students.

The Bee incorrectly cited the Stockton Unified School District as an example of one place where unreasonable requirements for home language instruction in several Asian languages have led to a freeze of \$3 million of supplemental funding. In fact, the restriction of funds was imposed on Stockton by the state Board of Education in July 1994 due to the district's ongoing failure to implement the English language development aspects of the program for LEP students, to train its teachers adequately and to provide primary language instruction in Spanish. The federal Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, concurs with our findings.

Contrary to The Bee's assertion, the department did not freeze the funds because the Stockton district did not apply for a waiver. We urged the district to apply for and then helped them submit the waiver, which applies to speakers of various languages in the district.

STOCKTON'S INACTION over a period of six years has led to the unfortunate circumstance of a freeze of supplemental funding. To restore its authority over these funds, the district needs only to submit an acceptable plan describing the remedial actions it will take and how it will hold all personnel accountable for the education of its LEP students. Other large, urban districts with diverse language groups have acted to build cohesive, system-wide services for LEP students. Stockton has not.

While many of Stockton's teachers have recently completed training and obtained Language Development Specialist certificates, they are not supported by adequate materials, or by a system that can ensure that LEP students will acquire English and succeed academically. One out of every three students in Stockton is LEP; 18 percent of these students receive no special language development services at all. The district has failed to teach English and academics adequately to more than 11,000 LEP students, in spite of our department's findings of noncompliance since 1988.

We hope that the discussion of how best to educate immigrant children can take place in a reasoned climate and be based on facts, which were not well represented in The Bee's Dec. 27 editorial.

AN OPPOSING VIEW: William D. Dawson stepped down as acting state superintendent of public instruction on Jan. 2.

Young English-Speakers Flee Quebec

Copyright 1996 The Christian Science Publishing Society

The Christian Science Monitor, January 18, 1996

BY: Fred Langan, Special to The Christian Science Monitor

DATELINE: MONTREAL

AU REVOIR TO HOME



ENGLISH-speaking young people are leaving Quebec following the narrow defeat of separatism in the Oct. 30 referendum.

"Let's face it, Quebec isn't an enticing place for an English person, especially with the anti-ethnic remarks made on referendum night," says Kosta Kostic, who will soon graduate with a degree in film and TV production from Concordia University. He's leaving the province right away. "Every person in the film business here is of French origin. That's who they're going to hire, even though I do speak French."

The exodus of English speakers from Quebec has been under way for decades, but it may have picked up momentum due to political uncertainty and open hostility toward so-called "ethnics" or non-French-speakers who voted against separation.

After the referendum, Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau blamed "money and ethnics," code words for the English-speaking community in Montreal, for separatism's defeat. Mr. Parizeau resigned after the remarks and is being replaced by Lucien Bouchard, another ardent separatist who will be sworn in Jan. 29.

But Parizeau's words, and the spirit with which they were delivered, has made many youths who don't belong to the French-speaking majority anxious about their futures.

Statistics back up the anecdotal evidence that young people are leaving.

"Long-term indications of youth attending English-language institutions showed just 27 percent of them believed they would still be in Quebec in 10 years," says David Ferrabee of Alliance Quebec, an English-language lobby group here.

"I see many of the people I grew up with once a year, at Christmas, when they come back here to visit their families," says Mr. Ferrabee, who grew up in Montreal.

The 1992 study conducted for Alliance Quebec by a professor at McGill University looked at general reasons for young Anglophones to leave the province: Strict language laws imposed by the provincial government, which limit the use of English; personal economic situations or lack of jobs; followed by general political conditions in Quebec.

But Ferrabee thinks that the English community's attitudes have changed since 1992. "I would suggest political worry has taken first place following the referendum result," he says. The federalists' narrow victory, 50.6 to 49.4 percent, has

rekindled hopes of the separatist movement.

"Because I'm English-speaking there's no way I'm going to get a job in Quebec," says Wendy Shaughnessy, a second-year math major at Concordia University here. "I can speak French, but I'll have a degree from an English-speaking university. They're obviously going to take someone from a French-speaking university."

English-speaking Quebecers have been worrying about Quebec nationalism for 30 years. In the five years following the first election of a separatist provincial government in 1976, 150,000 English-speaking Quebecers left the province, most of them for the rest of Canada, according to the federal government. There has been a continuing population drain since then.

Many of those leaving Quebec are well-educated and fluent in both English and French, just the type of people Quebec's economy should rely on whether it is independent or still part of Canada. For some, the reasons are political; for others, economic.

Of the 800,000 English-speakers in a province with a population of 7 million, the bulk of the Anglophones - 500,000 - live in Montreal. English speakers in Montreal once ran commerce in the city. No longer. Today, Francophone executives dominate business and, according to government statistics, are paid more than English-speaking employees.

To succeed in business today, knowing French is not enough. It pays to

be a descendant of original French settlers.

Bilingual English speakers make less money than unilingual French speakers, according to a recent study by Quebec's language office. Sixty percent of English Quebecers speak French; 32 percent of French-speaking Quebecers speak English.

That is why the bilingual Ms. Shaughnessy will leave for Calgary in May. The numbers tell her the jobs usually go to those from the French culture.

But not everyone who leaves does so because of politics. Unemployment is higher in Quebec than in neighboring Ontario. Toronto has long eclipsed Montreal as the financial capital of the country.

"I moved from Montreal to Toronto because this is where the work is," says Kevin Duggan, a financial trader. "For me, there was no political reason," he says. Unlike many others, he hopes to go back.

But Shaughnessy has no plans to return. She worries Mr. Bouchard will move the province quickly toward independence. It's something she can't live with. "Canada is a great country. I can't grasp the concept of why Quebec would want to separate." She also worries about being stuck as a citizen of a new country. "If Quebec separates and then I want to leave... well then Canada is going to frown on me because I'm Quebecois. I'd rather get out as soon as possible."

LANGUAGE BOND

Copyright 1995 The Times Mirror Company
The Los Angeles Times, November 19, 1995

George Ramos' Nov. 6 column misses the message of Quebec and bilingual education. The crux is not whether bilingual education will cause the Southwest to secede but the cohesive and divisive power of language. Language has united Quebec and divided Canada. Bilingual education sows those same seeds in our country.

The first step in assimilating an immigrant group is language. As the children learn the language, the perceived differences dissolve and the group becomes an integral part of society. Our history is a perfect example. This diverse nation has survived the Civil War, two world wars and racial and economic strife in no small part because of our common language.

Being a second-generation Hispanic, I am not insensitive to a desire to keep one's heritage alive. My grandparents immigrated from Mexico and until their deaths spoke little English, but insisted their children learn the language. Due to my family, I am fluent in both English and Spanish. As a graduate of a university and law school, I can attest how difficult it would be to succeed without a proper grounding in English.

It is naive to believe our educational system will produce a truly bilingual student. Bilingual education is really non-lingual education. The family, not government, must keep one's heritage and tongue alive. The state should ensure that language be a common bond that unites us, not a wall that separates us. We should recall that when God decided to disperse the masses at Babel, he chose the power of language.

DAVID J. PANTOJA

The joy in sharing language and culture

The San Diego Union-Tribune, December 14, 1995
by Michael Hayutin

Hayutin is a Carlsbad writer

The other night, my wife, two kids and I had dinner at a small Mexican family restaurant.

The whole experience, including the food, was wonderful. I was able to watch my kids enjoy a lesson in language and culture. Their eyes were glistening with enthusiasm as they were engaged in conversation with the waiters. With the help of my wife, who speaks Spanish, they were learning to order and express themselves in another language. The waiters seemed to be having as much fun as the kids.

I turned to my wife as we were concluding our meal and spoke about how this positive experience seemed to be in such stark contrast to the growing rancor concerning bilingual education.

There is legislation before Congress "to declare English the official language" and another to reduce the number of immigrants, both legal and illegal. There is a

growing trend to view any immigration negatively. Why now? Although the rate of immigration has increased slightly since 1990, the number of immigrants as a percentage of the population, is significantly lower than during peak periods in our history.

In part, the friction is due to the fact that we are experiencing a significant economic upheaval. That disruption has been symbolized by stagnant or falling real wages for over 20 years. These changing

People won't learn English because it is "official", but because they need it to succeed

economic times have altered family life, forced many more mothers into a work force, created fewer good jobs, left many kids alone and changed the idealized structure of the traditional American family.

The real reason for this change involves international competition taking over large chunks of manufacturing that the United States dominated for years. Unfortunately, there are politicians who will exploit the insecurities caused by these economic conditions to the disadvantage of those who speak and look differently than the majority.

It is far easier to pick up votes and gain support by attacking "them," than addressing the serious problems that have arisen as the rest of the world catches up with the American production machine.

To the extent we choose to ignore the greater economic problems and focus on the scapegoating, the wage and job structure will continue to decline. This will, in turn, increase the insecurities of many Americans and make exploitation of their fears a greater possibility. The result will be more

meaningless legislation that avoids the real issues.

To the extent we allow ourselves to lose confidence in the strength of our country and ability to take on the competition, we will look for solutions like limits on immigration, Proposition 187, 20-foot walls and abandonment of bilingual education for our new citizens.

People won't learn English because it is "official," but because they need it to succeed. The real question is whether we as a nation have the confidence to make this process easier. Whatever problems there are in the implementation and administration of bilingual education, we can't allow them to overwhelm the need to give the children of immigrants intense instruction in English.

For those who feel bilingual education is not the answer, let them give their full support to programs of total language immersion. Immigrants who are not able to become part of the

economic and social mainstream costs us all.

Responsible spending today will save welfare, police and prison costs in the future. Kids will be in school, and parents will contribute as taxpayers. Some of these people may turn out to be inventors, business owners, scientists, the very people who can help America's middle class get back on the road to growth and expansion.

Little Israel, with its limited resources and giant defense budget, has been able to successfully absorb many immigrants. Why? National attitude makes all the difference. From Day One, the national character has been geared to accepting large numbers of immigrants and finding ways to help them assimilate.

There has always been intensive government subsidized help in learning Hebrew and gaining access to needed social services. Hebrew with its unique alphabet is much more difficult to learn than English. This is especially true for those whose native language is Western in origin.

Yet they succeed. Temporary communities have been established exclusively for the education and integration of immigrants into Israel. There is a core national sense of confidence and determination to get the job done. Despite economic problems that have energized anti-immigrant tensions on occasion, the national commitment remains strong.

I hope Americans have a similar core commitment. Israel's is grounded in "the law of return" as a result of Holocaust. Our commitment should be grounded in the historic strength of our growth and prosperity that has, in large measure, been accomplished by immigrants.

As the children and grandchildren of immigrants, it is our duty to continue to support this noble tradition. Hopefully, we can focus on this history and the kind of joy I saw in the eyes of my kids as they shared language and culture with members of the newest generation of immigrants.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Is it an advantage or a disadvantage to be bilingual? Why?
2. Should all California students be bilingual?
3. Can we preserve our cultural traditions (such as language) in the family setting, or does such preservation need school involvement?
4. Does maintaining a cultural tradition such as language from another country also maintain loyalty to that country? Is it possible to preserve a cultural tie to another country and also to be patriotic or politically loyal to the United States? Why or why not?
5. How much does bilingual education and our policy about it have to do with immigration?
6. Why do immigrants learn English?

PART II: BILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE

Overview

Critics and champions of bilingual education do have a common goal: that all students who do not speak English as a native language become bilingual. All educators want non-native speakers to become fluent in speaking and competent in reading English. But as we saw in the first part, this common goal opens the door to a serious debate and leads to quite different viewpoints.

How should we go about bilingual education? As we will see in this section, there are serious challenges to our educational policy and serious problems with our educational practice. Since the early 1970s, California policy concerning bilingual education has been genuinely bilingual -- the maintenance of the student's native language in the curriculum along with a gradual development of English as a written and spoken language. The first page in this section discusses the various types of programs that are often lumped together under the heading of bilingual education. The programs that have received the most support from bilingual educators in California are those called Maintenance Bilingual education and Transitional education.

Why should we change these programs? One reason would be that research evidence shows they are not working. But if we look at the next two articles in this section, we can see that research shows that good bilingual instruction works very well. The first article summarizes current research on multicultural education and shows us what is important in carrying out a good program. The second excerpt from a longer research article shows us how a bilingual program would help students keep up in science while they are learning English.

Why then are we looking at legislation that proposes new and more limited programs of bilingual education? The next article in this section (which is from the LA Times) is titled, "Battle Heats Up Over Bilingual Education." As you read it, you will appreciate that there is much more to educational policy than doing what research shows us will work.

For example, we know that bilingual education is very successful in the classrooms of well-trained teachers over a substantial period of time. But what if we don't have the teachers and what if we aren't willing to commit the resources over a long period of time? How to teach someone a second language is not just

a problem for educational research. It is also a practical problem that the citizens of California must decide.

The current political choices are presented in three bills that are being considered by the legislature. These three bills represent a range of responses from the most limited form of instruction (Knight, AB 955) to the most generous (Alpert, AB 1041). In the middle is the bill by Firestone (AB 2310) which is currently the focus of debate. However, despite their differences, all these bills are more limiting than the state-mandated bilingual legislation of the 1970s, and they offer much less bilingual education than SB 33 (Mello) which was discussed in the first section of this packet.

The differences in these three bills support the changes in the policy of the California State Board of Education, adopted on July 14, 1995. Perhaps the most important change in policy is the substitution of local for state control. All three bills, to some degree, turn bilingual education over to the local districts, allowing districts to use any method of bilingual education that they see fit. These changes focus largely on the amount of time students can spend in a bilingual classroom, the learning of subjects in their native language, and the preparation of teachers for instruction in English as a second language. If we arranged the legislation on a continuum from the most limited bilingual education to the least limited, it would look like the chart on the next page.

These descriptions are only intended to give you a sense of the difference between these three bills and the current policy of teaching English learners in their native language while they learn English from specially trained teachers. The differences in the three bills will be better understood when you read them in the Appendix of this packet.

Even reading the bills will not give you a full sense of what they mean, however. For that, you need to read further about the frustrations and the successes of bilingual education. The articles that follow the Legislative Digest of the bills will give you a sense of what bilingual education is like in classrooms in California, and what schools might do if bilingual education came under local rather than state control. Just so we do not lose sight of who this debate is about, our final article focuses on some students and their experience in school as non-English speakers. As one student says, "when you don't know the language, your self-esteem starts to go." We all want to help these students. The questions are how, and how much?

The answers depend on all of us.

Most Limited	Most Extensive	
AB 955 (Knight) Equal Opportunity English Acquisition Act	AB 2310 (Firestone)	AB 1041 (Alpert)
remedial education in English for limited- English proficient pupils for 3 years	completely locally determined programs for English proficiency	100% locally deter- mined programs for English proficiency while continuing state- mandated programs
no state specification of methods of teaching English	state collected data on program effectiveness	access to curriculum by the best means possible while learning English
no special training for teachers	limited staff develop- ment	limited special training for teachers
	right of parents to place children in English-only class	

What We Can Learn from Multicultural Education Research

**Educators will be more successful if they understand five variables that
matter in working with a diverse student population.**

By Gloria Ladson-Billings
Educational Leadership, May 1994

Many findings from multicultural education research can be applied in the everyday world of teachers and administrators. This observation holds regardless of whether the educators work with many students of color or with only a few.

The research shows that five areas matter a great deal in the education of a multicultural population: teachers' beliefs about students, curriculum content and

materials, instructional approaches, educational settings, and teacher education. One other area, whether the race and ethnicity of teachers affects student learning, remains unclear.

Beliefs About Students Matter

To begin to see how teacher beliefs affect student achievement, imagine two new teachers. Don Wilson and Margie Stewart are starting their first year of teaching.

Don Wilson. After his first weeks of teaching in an urban school, Wilson is exhausted and uncertain about whether he chose the right profession. His class of 28 fourth graders are African Americans and Latinos. Wilson knows that they have not had many advantages, so he doesn't push them too hard. He wants his students to have fun learning. He worries, though, because many of them don't seem to be having fun or learning. Many are one or more achievement levels below national averages, and some attend school sporadically, fail to complete homework assignments, and seem unmotivated in the classroom. Although Wilson has sent several notes home expressing concern, parents have not responded. Wilson doubts that he makes any difference in the lives of his students.

Margie Stewart. The first weeks of teaching in a suburban school have been exhausting for Stewart, too, but she is enjoying herself. Of Stewart's 28 third graders, 23 are white, upper-middle-class children. Three of the remaining five are African American, and two are Mexican American (one speaks limited English). In general, the students test at or above grade level on standardized tests, but the students of color lag behind the others. Stewart is also concerned about Jose. Because Jose's English is limited, Stewart must explain everything to him four or five times, and she can seldom work with him one-on-one. She fears that he is a special needs student. Perhaps she will ask the school psychologist to test Jose.

The research literature suggests that how teachers like Wilson and Stewart think about education and students makes a pronounced difference in student performance and achievement (Apple 1990, Cooper 1979). Winfield (1986) found that teachers expect more from white students than from African American students, and they expect more from middle-class students than from working and lower-class students. Teachers often perceive African-American students from working or lower-class backgrounds as incapable of high-quality academic work. Both Wilson and Stewart are entertaining such thoughts. They are not attributing their problems with students of color to ineffective teaching approaches.

Sometimes, unrecognized or outright racism causes teachers to hold negative beliefs about students of color. A dramatic example from a first-year teacher's journal entry:

I hate (African-American students') attitude and their lingo. I hate to categorize it but ... I am more comfortable with black students who act white (Birrell 1993).

Such negative attitudes toward students of color lower expectations for achievement, which lowers achievement (King and Ladson-Billings 1990, Lipman 1993).

Content and Materials Matter

Teachers who are sincerely committed to multicultural education cannot be satisfied with superficial celebrations of heroes and holidays. This approach to content trivializes multicultural education and conveys the idea that diversity issues come into play only during celebratory moments with foods, fun, and festivals. In the multicultural festival model, teachers, students, and parents typically spend lots of time and energy preparing for an all-school activity. Students may do background research about a culture, prepare maps, and help create indigenous costumes. Parents may help to prepare various ethnic foods. On the day of the festival, members of the school community go from class to class, visiting the various cultures, sampling the foods, and enjoying dances, songs, and arts and crafts. At the end of the day, everyone agrees that the annual event has been a great success. Then teachers and students go back to their real work.

In the transformative model, on the other hand, multicultural education is not a separate, isolated, once-a-year activity. Instead, the regular curriculum includes a range of cultural perspectives, as in the following two classroom scenarios.

In a primary classroom, the teacher reads several versions of the Cinderella story. One is the familiar European tale by the Brothers Grimm, but other versions are Chinese, Egyptian, and Zimbabwean. The teacher helps students compare the different versions. Similarities include story structure, plot development, moral and ethical dilemmas, and the use of magic. Differences include standards of beauty, settings, use of language, and specific characters. The students absorb the importance of understanding cultural differences and similarities.

In an intermediate history class, students study the African slave trade, but not solely from the perspective of the European traders. They also read a range of primary documents, like the slave narrative called *The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano* (it compares slavery in Africa with slavery in the Americas). In addition, the teacher introduces information about the European feudal system. The students compare the

lives of enslaved people in Africa, the Americas, and medieval Europe. Finally, they generate analytical questions, such as: What is the relationship between slavery and racism? How could a nation striving for equality and justice permit slavery? Why did some people in Africa participate in the slave trade? And how does the textbook's treatment of slavery compare to primary source material?

The teacher in this class plans to do similar in-depth study when the class studies the displacement of Native Americans, the Spanish mission system, European immigration of the 1890s, and Japanese internment. Although the transformative approach requires redesigning the curriculum, searching for additional materials, and limiting the number of topics taught, the teacher thinks the outcome is worth the effort. Students learn more content and develop a real ability to ask and answer critical questions.

The materials used in classrooms have important effects, too. As Banks' comprehensive literature review (1993a) points out, children are aware of their race and ethnicity at an early age. "If realistic images of ethnic and racial groups are included in teaching materials in a consistent, natural, and integrated fashion," Banks (1993b) concludes, "all children can be helped to develop more positive racial attitudes." Similar results are reported on gender issues (Scott and Schau 1985).

If classrooms use materials that do not portray diverse groups realistically, students are likely to develop, maintain, and strengthen the stereotypes and distortions in the traditional curriculum. Text analysis (a common form of multicultural research) indicates that textbook images and representations exclude, distort, and marginalize women, people of color, and people from lower socioeconomic echelons. A growing proportion of textbooks do include diversity, but their images and representations tend to be superficial and incorrect (Swartz 1992).

Instructional Approaches Matter

Changes to make curriculum content more equitable must be accompanied by changes that make pedagogy evenhanded. To ensure "equitable pedagogy," Banks says, teachers must modify instruction to "facilitate academic achievement among students from diverse groups."

To some teachers, simultaneously dealing with the flood of new materials and modifying instructional approaches seems like an overwhelming task. These teachers think that it is all they can do to teach the new material in old ways. In other classrooms, however, teachers have asked themselves, what one move can I make to ensure that all students have opportunities for success?

For some teachers, providing more equitable pedagogy may be as simple as using more cooperative learning strategies in class. After all, cooperative learning was first developed as a way to create more equitable classroom environments (Cohen and Benton 1988, Slavin 1987).

For other teachers, equitable pedagogy will demand that they use the language and understandings that children bring to school to bridge the gap between what students know and what they need to learn (Au and Jordan 1981, Erickson and Mohatt 1982, Jordan 1985, Vogt et al. 1987). In addition, the total school context must come to accept whatever students have learned and experienced as legitimate knowledge (Irvine 1990, Ladson-Billings 1992). Teachers can further these ends if they spend time in their students' community and apply in the classroom what they learned in students' homes.

Teachers may also profit by learning their students' language. A teacher who knows how to ask and answer basic questions in a second language can often make the classroom a welcoming and psychologically safe environment for speakers of that language. If a teacher becomes sufficiently fluent to teach academic content in English and a student's home language, the teacher tacitly promotes bilingualism and biliteracy (Hornberger 1988).

Educational Settings Matter

Forty years ago, the Supreme Court handed down a landmark decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared separate schools inherently unequal. Yet now, after years of hard-fought battles to desegregate the nation's schools, most students of color still attend segregated schools (Orfield 1989). Even when students go to desegregated schools, they are resegregated within the school via tracking and ability grouping (Oakes 1985).

For students of color, perhaps more devastating is the lack of access to high-quality education (Kozol 1991). Clearly, as a society, our care and concern for student learning is differentiated along racial, class, and ethnic lines.

To grasp the impact of these inequities, imagine that our new teachers, Wilson and Stewart, were to participate in a school exchange program. Wilson's students would visit Stewart's class. Then Stewart's class would visit Wilson's. What will each setting informally teach the children?

When Wilson's students arrive at Stewart's school, they are struck by its physical beauty and space. Well-kept grounds have ample playground equipment. Inside the school, the halls gleam, and a lively buzz emanates from the various classrooms. Each brightly-lighted classroom has at least one computer. The school library has several computers, CD-ROMs, laser disks, and an extensive library of videotapes. The school

has many special rooms: a gymnasium, a multi-purpose room, vocal and instrumental music rooms, an art room, and a room for enrichment activities. In each of the rooms is a teacher who regularly works with Stewart's students, freeing her for 45 minutes each day. She uses the time to plan, read, hold parent conferences, and do research.

When Stewart's class visits Wilson's school, they enter an old structure built in the 1920s. Its concrete yard is littered with broken glass, graffiti cover the walls, and the only piece of playground equipment is a netless basketball hoop. Inside the building, the dark halls are eerily silent, since room doors are closed and locked from the inside. There is a room where books are stored, but they are not catalogued because there is no librarian. The entire school shares one VCR and monitor. One of the two 16 mm film projectors is broken. A few filmstrips hide in various closets. The one room that does have computers, listening centers, and film loop machines is the Chapter One lab.

Here, students with literacy and mathematics deficits receive small group instruction and skill practice for 30 to 45 minutes each day. In a corner of the multi-purpose room, 12 gifted students in grades 3 to 5 meet one morning a week with a visiting gifted and talented education teacher. Classroom teachers are responsible for all other instruction, so they rarely have time to plan or confer.

What Stewart's students learn from their encounter is that Wilson's students are underprivileged, and perhaps undeserving. The students will probably come to see inequities as normal and to equate African Americans and Latinos with poverty.

Meanwhile, Wilson's students learn that material advantages go with being white. Since Stewart's and Wilson's students are all about the same age with similar interests and abilities, the major difference that Wilson's students can see is skin color.

The few students of color in Stewart's class learn that they are very lucky. Under other circumstances, they could be at Wilson's school. Even though they may do poorly in a predominately white school, they regard being there as a privilege.

Teacher Education Matters

If Wilson's and Stewart's students derive naive conceptions from their exchange visits, the teachers themselves also have trouble making sense of the differences. Neither teacher learned much about cultural variation during pre-service preparation (Zeichner 1992, Ladson-Billings, in press).

Wilson took an ESL course, but Stewart did not, and she has Jose. Both Wilson and Stewart took a required human relations course, but, although it presented some historical information about Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos, it was silent on European-American cultures and the role of culture in learning and achievement. Both Wilson and Stewart believed, further, that the course was

designed to make them feel guilty. As a result, they silently resisted the material, and its impact on their eventual practice was sharply reduced.

As inservice teachers, Wilson and Stewart have had some opportunities to learn about multicultural education, but these have taken the form of fleeting, one-time workshops. The experiences had little or no follow-up, and no one attempted to ensure that teachers applied the new information (Sleeter 1992).

Fortunately, one of Wilson's colleagues is a graduate student who has taken several courses dealing with race, class, and gender issues. He has learned from the experiences of two teachers like Vivian Palcy (1979) and Jane Elliot (Peters 1987). Wilson's colleague is impressive because he seems to manage his classes easily, and his students achieve well on tasks that go beyond worksheets and drills. Wilson plans to enroll in a multicultural education course next semester. He hopes to learn something that will help him succeed with students of color.

While Wilson is motivated to change, Sewart is not. Because she is successful with most of her students, she thinks her lack of success with students of color stems from their deficiencies. Stewart's colleagues and the parents of her white students reinforce this belief.

Does the Race and Ethnicity of Teachers Matter?

Whether teachers' race and ethnicity affect student achievement remains an open question. We know that most teachers in the United States are white and that the next largest group, African Americans, comprise less than 5 percent of all public school teachers. We also know that the majority of students in the 25 largest public school systems are students of color. No empirical evidence, however, indicates that students of color learn better when taught by teachers of color. The most recent review of the literature on African-American teachers (King 1993) finds no connection between teacher race/ethnicity and student achievement. The positive aspect of this finding is that it makes all teachers accountable for teaching all students. If current demographic trends hold, our student population will become more diverse, while the teaching population remains predominantly white. The implication is that if teachers are to be effective, they will need to be prepared to teach children who are not white. If we are lucky, more teachers will follow Wilson's lead. They will know that the multicultural education research literature can help them understand themselves, their culture, and the cultures of others, and be more successful with all students.

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CTA BILINGUAL POLICY

The California Teachers Association believes that all students are entitled to equal access to all educational opportunities. CTA further believes that students without English proficiency are denied equal access unless appropriate educational support is provided.

Bilingual education encompasses a range of instructional programs. These programs aim to develop proficiency in English. Additionally some programs seek to produce fully bilingual students.

The term Bilingual Education has been used to refer to a cadre of approaches and methodologies. Regardless of title, these programs have two goals—language acquisition and content learning. The following glossary reflects a number of programs which have been included in the term Bilingual Education. These definitions were developed from a review of the literature and may not reflect current local usage.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program: Students of different language and cultural backgrounds in ESL classrooms are taught by teachers trained in linguistics and second language acquisition. The native language of the student is not used. Many regard ESL as one of the components of most bilingual programs and not as a program in itself.

Immersion Program: Students are placed in an instructional program in which the non-native language is used for content area teaching and not simply as a subject of study. Students have limited proficiency in the target language. Teachers modify the language of instruction to facilitate comprehension.

Maintenance Bilingual Education Program: This program begins with instruction entirely in the native language, and proceeds gradually to incorporate second-language learning until the curriculum is divided equally between the two languages. This program seeks to develop proficiency in both languages.

Sheltered English Program: Students receive content area instruction in classes where teachers modify the English language to facilitate comprehension by non-native speakers. Techniques may include the use of controlled vocabulary and idioms, contextual clues, and comprehension checks.

Submersion Program: Language-minority students are placed in classrooms with a majority of students who are native speakers of the language of instruction. Students are given little or no special help in overcoming language problems. Submersion is often described as the "Sink or Swim" approach.

Transitional Program: This program is designed to help students make the transition to an all-English curriculum by providing native language instructional support (including content area instruction and language arts instruction in the native language), along with instruction in the English as a second language. Native language instruction ceases when English proficiency is attained.

Excerpts from:

Trends in Bilingual Education at the Secondary School Level Shaping Instruction to Promote the Success of Language Minority Students: An Analysis of Four High School Classes

by Rosemary C. Henze & Tamara Lucas
Peabody Journal of Education

Biology I for Spanish Speakers

The teacher of this class, who had a bilingual endorsement, said he focused on language acquisition as well as content in the class although he considered himself a science teacher, not a language teacher. The class was conducted entirely in Spanish except that he told students a few words in English -- for example: parasite, hooks, host organism. He was not, however, a native Spanish speaker; he was a Los Angeles born Mexican American who learned Spanish as a second language. A few times during the class, he could not think of words in Spanish and asked students to supply them, and students corrected his pronunciation once or twice.

During the first part of the class, the teacher conducted a review of the characteristics of several types of organisms, mostly types of worms. During this review, he stood in front of the room and asked question after question in quick succession. He addressed individual students, asking them to tell him characteristics. He frequently pointed at students as he called on them, using their names and pushing them to think quickly. He was very energetic, used large gestures, spoke loudly and quickly, and kept the students' attention focused on him at every moment. He addressed almost everything he said to someone in particular, and he addressed many of the students, not just one or two. He was enthusiastic and seemed to assume that the students were enthusiastic, too.

After the review, students got up from their tables and went to the sides of the room, where they had stored slides containing water which they collected from a pond and which was likely to contain some of the organisms they had been studying. Some took the microscopes to their seats to look at their slides; others stood at the counters and looked. Many worked together, talking to each other about what they were seeing. The teacher walked around talking to them, too. He spoke to them -- always in Spanish -- not as someone who had all of the answers but as a thinking and informed person who could make educated guesses about what they were seeing in their slides. For example, he looked into one person's slide and said, "*Me parece que esto es un (unintelligible). Tal vez se dividió. Tal vez. No se. Pero tal vez*" [It seems to me that this is a *. Maybe it divided itself. Maybe. I don't know. But maybe].

The students were actively participating throughout the class -- talking, thinking, doing, using their hands and their heads, interacting with each other and with the teacher. Students seemed comfortable with him. One girl, for example, took him by the hand and pulled him to look at her slide. The teacher was in control -- calling on students, making them think about particular things at particular times -- yet the students participated a lot. They called out questions without raising their hands and he would answer or ask another student to answer.

Commentary

The rapport that this teacher had with his students was palpable. He and the students expressed their respect for and their engagement with each other through various means that are difficult to describe (e.g., tones of voice, facial expressions, gestures, and body language). This rapport, respect, and engagement were fundamental to the success of the class and greatly facilitated the achievement of the objectives discussed below.

High expectations. By offering a biology class for LM students, this school showed that LM students were expected to learn science that was more advanced than the general science courses offered in many schools. They were expected to learn the science that was appropriate for students of their age and grade level, regardless of their proficiency in English. The teacher also showed that he held high expectations of students in several ways. During the review at the beginning of class, he rarely accepted only one piece of information from a student. Instead, he pushed them to tell him more than they at first volunteered, showing them that he assumed they knew more.

The teacher also promoted higher order thinking by pushing the students to think for themselves. During the microscope work, for example, he didn't just give them answers, but encouraged them to come up with ideas themselves. He asked them to draw inferences about the organisms they were seeing using information they had learned in the textbook and in lectures, thus making complex connections among different kinds of information, experience, and knowledge that they had come into contact with in the class.

Language development. Because the class was conducted in Spanish, the students developed both interpersonal/communicative skills and academic skills in Spanish. Through informal interactions among themselves and with the teacher, they developed informal oral Spanish skills. Because the teacher was not a native speaker of Spanish and because they had a relationship with him that allowed them to correct him, their confidence in their own proficiencies was reinforced and valued.

They also developed academic skills in Spanish through the lectures, discussions, and activities focused on the content of the course. The teacher did not use a textbook

because he had not found an appropriate text in Spanish and the students could not read a biology text in English. Instead, he used lectures, film clips, and handouts that he prepared in Spanish. Thus, while there was less opportunity for the students to develop their literacy skills than there might have been if there had been a text, they did have contact with written materials in Spanish through the handouts and lecture notes. In addition, discussions of what was and was not "correct" Spanish helped students develop their metalinguistic awareness.

English language development in the class consisted primarily of vocabulary building. The teacher gave the students vocabulary for the concepts being discussed in English as well as in Spanish so that they would be better able to transfer what they had learned in the Spanish biology class to later science classes that they might take in English. Since the students were continuing to develop their native language skills, they were also reinforcing the foundation upon which they were simultaneously developing English proficiency in their ESL and other English language classes and interactions (see Cummins, 1981).

Content knowledge. A biology class should help students learn biology. It should provide the means for the particular students in the class to develop content knowledge. In order to be able to develop content knowledge, students must have access to the content and it must be presented in ways that engage them (e.g., in ways that make connections between the content and students' lives). Because this biology class was taught in Spanish, the students in the class (who were not yet fluent in English) had access to the content of biology and were able to tackle content at a higher level of complexity than they would have in English. Thus, they were able to study many of the key concepts in biology. However, the teacher said that he did not cover as much material in this class as in the "regular" biology class. In addition, because there was no textbook, the content was not fully equivalent to that in the regular curriculum.

The variety of learning activities also promoted the development of content knowledge. The class combined presentation and assimilation of information (e.g., lectures, handouts, viewing of films) with hands-on activities. Prior to the class we observed, the students had studied microorganisms and had then gone to a nearby pond to collect water that might contain them. During the class, they looked at the water under microscopes to try to identify any of the microorganisms that they could. This variety of activities allowed for different modes of learning, made biology relevant to the students' lives, and actively involved the students in learning.

Student involvement and engagement. Both in the teacher-led review session and in the more student-directed group work, the teacher designed and conducted the class to promote active student involvement and engagement in class activities. The

frequent and varied student participation provided the means through which students could be actively involved in their own learning and could develop social interaction skills. The students were obviously comfortable with and respectful of each other and the teacher, which suggested that the class had supported the development of social skills. As the teacher pushed individual students to think of characteristics of organisms during the review session, other students made supportive comments and waited patiently while those on the spot thought about their responses. Although the teacher did not formally organize the microscope activity, in which students worked in pairs and groups, they quickly and easily got together with other students and talked about what they were seeing in the microscopes. They engaged in sometimes animated discussions with each other and with the teacher.

Self-Esteem. There were a number of ways in which this class promoted the building of student self-esteem. First, the extensive use of their native language to teach biology showed a value and respect for part of their lives and identity that was likely to contribute to feelings of self-esteem. Beyond showing value for their language, the fact that the class was taught in Spanish also allowed the students to tackle content at a higher level of complexity than they could have done in English. Offering such a class showed that the school really wanted them to learn biology, that they could learn complex academic content even though they were not fully fluent in English. They were not relegated to general science simply because they were not proficient in English, but were respected enough that a special class was offered to make it possible for them to learn biology. In addition, the fact that the teacher had learned Spanish as a second language, had become fluent enough to be able to teach in Spanish, and wanted to teach in Spanish showed respect and value for their language.

The teacher also promoted student self-esteem by pushing them to think during the review and the microscope work, which showed that he had high expectations of them. He assumed that they were capable of contributing to the class and of responding to his high expectations. For example, after a student had described an organism during the review, he would say, "*Dime mas*" [Tell me more]. Then, after the student had come up with more information, he might say, "*Mas?*"

The teacher obviously knew each student. During the review, he gave special attention to individuals by calling on them by name, looking directly at them, and showing that he was listening to them. During the microscope activity, he walked around and interacted with many individual students in a friendly, supportive way, pushing them to think, to draw inferences, and to draw on the information they had learned. His obvious affection and respect for the students also helped to increase their self-esteem.

BATTLE HEATS UP OVER BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Los Angeles Times, April 8, 1996

by Richard Lee Colvin, Times Education Writer

In a softly lit, Confederate-gray conference room a short march from the state Capitol, Benjamin Lopez is preparing his troops -- 15 crusaders for bilingual education -- for all-out war.

Teaching children in Spanish or other non-English languages has been under assault for almost two years by California voters who passed the anti-illegal immigrant Proposition 187, by a results-oriented State Board of Education, which gave local districts leeway to try other methods, and by the perennial critics, those cultural conservatives who view bilingual education as a nearly treasonous waste of money.

But the next major battle begins this week, when the California Legislature will debate proposals that Lopez, a canny, stubborn lawyer and longtime champion of bilingual education, says would "destroy 25 years of progress."

In meetings up and down the state, he has been telling bilingual program directors like these, dozens of whom trek to Sacramento any time the issue comes up, that they must not give ground. They must make the case for teaching children in the language they hear at home -- the language of their dreams -- in the strongest possible terms. Negotiating, he tells them, would amount to slow surrender.

"If we hold tight and persevere this year, the chances are very good that we can probably feel a lot safer the next five years," says Lopez.

It is a political strategy that for 15 years or more has proved remarkably successful in protecting one of the state's most controversial educational programs, one that is supposed to serve more than 1.2 million California students whose first language is Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Cambodian or one of the dozens of others spoken by recent immigrants.

In essence, the program -- enshrined in state policy as the ideal -- advocates teaching children in their home language for seven years or longer to build a strong foundation of academic skills and fluency in two languages.

But that strategy has failed to address the educational crisis that has provided foes of bilingual education with powerful ammunition. Despite recent progress, the state still has 20,000 fewer bilingual teachers than it needs, meaning a quarter of the students not fluent in English are left to struggle in classrooms with no special help whatsoever. Nearly one-third of Latino students, who make up by far the greatest proportion of those not fluent in English, drop out before graduating from high school. And fewer than

5% of Latinos are eligible for the University of California when they do graduate.

Only one-third of the students who are learning to speak English come in contact with teachers fluent in their home language. Most, if they get any special help at all, get by only with the help of a bilingual aide or special classes in English for part of the day.

Public Debate

On Wednesday, at a legislative hearing on a bill sponsored by moderate Republican Assemblyman Brooks Firestone of Los Olivos, the passionately held claims and counterclaims regarding bilingual education are expected to get their most public airing in a decade. The hearing is expected to prompt a draining debate likely to range far beyond educational methodology to issues of cultural identity, opportunity and racism.

"They want to go back to 1954 and say, 'Separate is equal,' " said Lopez of his opponents, referring to the U.S. Supreme Court school desegregation decision. "The hell with that."

Those arguing for change are equally adamant. "It's frightening to see that what a lot of advocates of native language instruction are advocating is the status quo, and the status quo doesn't work around the state," said Jeannine L. English, executive director of the Little Hoover Commission, a state watchdog agency.

In a critical 1993 report, the bipartisan commission called for replacing State Department of Education methodological mandates with *local flexibility* to employ a variety of instructional approaches that have been shown to work in different settings. The commission also urged the creation of a testing program to track the progress of non-fluent students and close what many people say is a huge stumbling block in the bilingual debate -- a lack of performance data.

Those recommendations are embodied in Firestone's bill. Bilingual education advocates managed to get a similar bill by Assemblywoman Dede Alpert (D-Coronado) watered down last year but it is still alive, awaiting action in the Senate. This year, with Republicans firmly in control in the Assembly, Firestone's bill is expected to be sent quickly to the Senate. There, where Democrats are in charge, it faces an uncertain welcome.

California's ambivalence about bilingual education has long made it hospitable to opponents -- mainly cultural conservatives, who decry the use of languages other than English in the schools.

Now, however, with the numbers of non-English speaking students continuing to rise by the equivalent of 1,500 or more classrooms a year, proponents are facing attacks from more politically daunting sources: moderate legislators such as

Alpert and Firestone who say their goal is improving such programs; Latino parents, such as those at Los Angeles' 9th Street School who organized a boycott of classes out of concern that their children are not learning enough English to join the economic mainstream, and even teachers, some of whom fear losing their jobs because they speak only English.

Given the breadth of the opposition, some bilingual education supporters say it's time to accept a new political reality -- that their ideal of teaching children in their home language supplemented by daily English lessons will never be achieved.

"We have to find some middle ground," said Melinda Melendez, a state Senate consultant who was among those who pushed for pioneering bilingual education laws beginning in the late 1970s. "The sad part about saying that...is that it's without regard to the soundness of the educational theory I believe in. It's more of a pragmatic, politically expedient statement."

But Reynaldo F. Macias, a professor at UC Santa Barbara and director of the Linguistic Minority Research Institute, disagreed and said bilingual education supporters must become even more aggressive.

"The attacks are really motivated by the attempt to eliminate non-English languages and...the strategy is to criticize the bilingual programs and create cultural panic," he said.

To fight back, he said, supporters should argue that being bilingual benefits the nation's economy, not just individual job prospects or civil rights.

Lopez and his allies, the 6,000-member California Assn. of bilingual Educators and other groups, are not yet willing to abandon what is, for them, an article of faith. "We have drawn a line in the sand," he said.

California's bilingual education law, one of the most far-reaching and specific in the country, expired in 1987. But the advocates cling to the fact that the law's essential elements have been preserved. Firestone's bill would eliminate those rules, and opponents fear that districts would revert to satisfying far less stringent federal standards.

Teaching children only in English "just seems to me is a huge waste of potential," said Paula Jacobs, director of bilingual education for the Davis Unified School District.

Like most districts, Davis serves most of its non-English speaking students with aides and special lessons in English. And Jacobs said she sees the toll it takes, dulling the enthusiasm of students who fall behind because they do not understand.

Advocates Gear Up

Although bilingual education research has produced widely different results, a recent study out of George Mason

University in Fairfax, Va., seems to bolster the supporters' arguments that students who spend five to seven years learning mostly in their own language do better than those enrolled in other types of programs.

To fight back, and get that point across, the advocates are planning to lobby hard in the Capitol while acknowledging problems with current programs--emphasizing that the state and many districts have failed to devote sufficient resources to making the programs work.

But they also are polishing the image of programs that rely heavily on a child's home language. The California Assn. of Bilingual Educators has hired a full-time public relations consultant, and supporters are inviting legislators and members of the media and the public to visit their programs.

"The classroom teachers are doing a good job, and they're being stymied and frustrated because...we don't have the resources to go out in a campaign that would bring the success stories into the open," said Rosalia Salinas, a San Diego County bilingual education administrator who is the association's president.

One school district considered by the group to have all the elements needed for success is Montebello, which serves several formerly middle-class communities to the east and south of downtown Los Angeles.

Spanish is the first language for half of the district's 30,000 students and, for

nearly 10,000 of them, it is also the main language of instruction. Most also receive special lessons in English and hear English spoken during time devoted to art, music and physical education.

"Obviously our goal is for the kids to learn English, but we don't push English," said Silvina Rubenstein, an association officer who heads the district's bilingual program. "We've learned a lesson. Many years ago kids were pushed into English, and they didn't have literacy in their own language."

That emphasis, which runs counter to the idea that the purpose of bilingual education should be to teach children to speak English as quickly as possible, is obvious at Bell Gardens Elementary, where nearly 1,000 out of the 1,200 students in grades kindergarten through fourth speak Spanish and are taught mostly in that language by fully licensed, bilingual teachers.

In a kindergarten class, no English words are apparent except a text in small letters that is posted too high for the children to see. Teacher Velia Hernandez is coaxing her shy pupils to describe in Spanish their drawings, which include a rainbow, a round-faced figure dressed in red and a yellow sun.

A combined class of third- and fourth-graders, however, indicates that students do learn English. Some of the essays on the walls about Abraham Lincoln and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. are written in English. During an English-language

reenactment of the legend of St. Patrick, the students eagerly wave their hands to get a chance to respond to questions.

Many parents like the mixture of Spanish and English. "I consider Spanish to be a treasure," said one parent, Irene Rosas. "It gives us two possibilities, two windows, two worlds...and those who are opposed to Spanish are racists who want to keep us down."

Still, statistically the school's performance looks troubling -- not a single child moved last year from instruction in Spanish to instruction in English. In fact, district-wide, fewer than two of every 100 nonfluent students each year -- among the lowest figures in the state -- were able to meet the district's five-part criteria for leaving special instructional programs behind. In the Los Angeles Unified School District, and statewide, about six of every 100 students make that move annually.

Los Angeles pioneered the so-called "late-exit" method favored in Montebello. But even Los Angeles, recognizing the direction of the political winds, is revising its program to emphasize the importance of students making the transition to instruction in English.

"It's frustrating that we get into a political debate about instructional strategies," said Mark Slavkin, president of the Los Angeles Board of Education. "Elected leaders and taxpayers ought to ask just one question: Are they learning

English and are they up to speed in their basic subject areas?"

Rubenstein said students in the district's bilingual education program have higher test scores than their English-speaking peers, even if many are not fully fluent when they graduate.

"We're not concerned as much about when they learn...in English as we are about the skills they learn in their own language," she said.

Defending the Bill

But Laura Martinez, an ambitious sixth-grader at Montebello Intermediate School who is in a class that is still struggling with English, worries that she has been held back even though she is proud to be bilingual.

"If I had started learning English in kindergarten, I think I would have a better vocabulary and read better and write better," she said to a visitor recently, while poring over essays her peers had written on the Roman myth of Proserpina. "My goal is to speak, read and write like if all my life I've been speaking English."

Firestone's bill would allow districts such as Montebello to continue what they are doing. But it also would make it easier for districts to try other methods. The state Board of Education adopted a narrow version of that idea in revising its bilingual education policy last summer. So far, only one district, the Westminster

district in Orange County, has taken advantage of the option to get permission to teach children in English with the help of bilingual aides.

Firestone defended his bill, saying it "does not in any way attack the need for bilingual education."

"This is a very reasonable, rational approach to a very real problem," he said. "The fact is that the numbers of students not fluent in English is growing steadily and the number transitioning into English is unacceptable."

Firestone's bill has prompted passionate responses from both sides. Jacobs, the Davis bilingual program director, said she was particularly appalled that the legislation, AB 2310, would reduce the amount of training teachers are required to take. "It's so absurd," she said. "How can the legislators be so stupid. They're saying, 'Let's just legislate what's bad for kids.'"

But nearly 200 of Firestone's constituents wrote to him on the issue, most applauding his efforts. "I cannot think of one good reason for sustaining the current system but I can come up with dozens of reasons for suspending it, not the least of which are common sense and fiscal responsibility" a Carpinteria constituent wrote.

Bilingual Education Primer

Bilingual education takes several forms, and research is in conflict over which one works best, partly because comparative data do not exist for California schools. Generally, programs fall into one of the first two categories:

****Immersion:** Students are taught in English, usually with simplified vocabulary and sometimes with support from a classroom aide fluent in their home language. Students move into mainstream classes quickly but may lack a firm academic foundation and may falter later. Non-fluent California students served: about 45%.

****Transitional bilingual education:** Instruction is in student's home language, with special lessons in English. In the most extreme form, it can take seven years for students to move into mainstream classes. A recent major study found that this is the best guarantee of long-term academic success. Downside: It requires fully bilingual teachers, and effectiveness may be reduced when students move from school to school. California students served: about 28%.

****Submersion:** No special services. Although no research supports this approach, about 27% of California students not fluent in English are taught this way.

LOS ANGELES TIMES EDITORIALS



Bilingual Education Issue: Sacramento Gets Hot Potato

Legislature must fully confront public school problem

The debate over bilingual education shifts this week to Sacramento. Reform is long overdue on the critical problem of teaching a growing number of schoolchildren who are not fluent in English. The goal should be achieving proficiency in verbal and written English as quickly as possible.

Skyrocketing enrollment of children who speak little or no English puts intense pressure on the state's public school districts. English is a second language for more than 1.26 million public school students, most of whom speak Spanish at home. This trend is expected to continue because of the generally high Latino birth-rate and continued immigration from Spanish-speaking countries.

Federal law and a 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision guarantee equal access to public education for all children regardless of their native language. In the shadow of the ugly national debate over immigration, state lawmakers will be grappling with bilingual education in a heavily political atmosphere. The challenge is a major one.

An Assembly committee is expected to consider a bill that would give local school districts greater freedom in teaching non-English-speaking children basic subjects as long as the students made progress. It sounds simple, but although California has had bilingual education for 20 years the results have been uneven and in some cases crippling to the child's further education. The bill, AB 2310, sponsored by a moderate Republican assemblyman, Brooks Firestone of Los Olivos, has some merit. It is results-oriented. It would allow freedom from

traditional bilingual teaching methods if students were shown to be making progress. That high—and appropriate—hurdle is needed to show that any approach works and to avoid a surge in the failure rate of bilingual students.

The bill would also require the development of a statewide assessment system to measure that progress. Such a system should be in place now—but is not—to chart the long-term gain.

The proposed system would provide a snapshot of educational needs. How many students are spending six or seven years in classes taught in their first language before finally making the transition to mainstream English-language classes? How many are ending up illiterate in two languages because the system somehow failed them, and how many are becoming fully literate in English?

The Firestone bill is expected to zip through the Republican-dominated Assembly. But the measure, as written, has some problems. It would reduce the amount of training required for teachers. They need more—not less—training to overcome the difficulties of educating non-English-speaking students.

The Firestone bill is likely to stall in the Democrat-controlled Senate, but nevertheless it offers a good starting point for the legislative debate on how to teach a second language. Other bills are pending but few have the prospects of this measure.

California cannot afford to reduce its commitment to bilingual education, especially at a time when the enrollment is growing at a rate of 1,500 new classrooms a year. These students represent a key part of California's future.



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICY

ADOPTED: January 10, 1986

AMENDED: August 11, 1987

REVISED: July 14, 1995

SUBJECT: Policy Statement on Educational Programs and Services for
Limited-English Proficient Students

After considerable deliberation and discussion, the California State Board of Education adopts the following policy statement on educational programs and services for limited-English proficient students (or "English learners"). This policy statement is intended to guide school districts and motivate them to implement high quality language and academic programs for English learners.

Intent. Whereas the state recognizes that the size and diversity of the population of English learners is constantly increasing, and these students require supplemental services, funding, and staffing, the State Board of Education strongly encourages districts to monitor closely the development of these students' English proficiency and academic achievement so they might be placed in mainstream English programs as quickly, efficiently, and effectively as possible.

Federal Law. The 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols* as codified in the *Equal Education Opportunities Act* and other federal laws require that each educational agency "take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs." A three-part analysis is used to determine "appropriate action."

- Use sound theory. The educational theory upon which instruction is based must be sound.
- Provide adequate support. The school system must provide the procedures, resources, and personnel necessary to apply the theory in the classroom. The resulting program must be implemented effectively.
- Achieve results. After a reasonable period, application of the theory must actually overcome English language barriers confronting the

students and must not leave them with substantive academic deficits.

State Law. The specific programmatic provisions of California's "bilingual education" program "sunset" on June 30, 1987, in keeping with *Education Code* section 62000.2(d). However, funds for that program "continue for the general purposes of that program as specified in the provisions relating to the establishment and operation of the program" in keeping with *Education Code* section 62002. Moreover, parent advisory committees required by that program "continue as prescribed by the appropriate law or regulation in effect as of January 1, 1979," in keeping with *Education Code* section 62002.5.

The State Board finds and declares that the "bilingual education" program that sunset under *Education Code* section 62002.2(d) is the *Moscone-Chacon Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act of 1976*, Article 3 (commencing with section 52160) of chapter 7 of Part 28 of the *Education Code*.

The State Board of Education finds and declares that the general purposes of the Act are eight in number and expressed as follows, based upon the language contained in *Education Code* section 52161. The general purposes are listed here in the same order as they appear in the statute.

1. "The Legislature directs school districts to provide for in-service programs to qualify existing and future personnel in the bilingual and crosscultural skills necessary to serve the pupils of limited English proficiency of this state...[and] intends that the public institutions of higher education establish programs to qualify teachers and administrators in the bilingual and crosscultural skills necessary to serve these pupils."
2. "The Legislature finds and declares that the primary goal of all programs under this article is, as effectively and efficiently as possible, to develop in each child fluency in English."
3. "The programs shall also provide positive reinforcement of the self-image of participating pupils."
4. "The programs shall also...promote crosscultural understanding...."
5. "The programs shall also...provide equal opportunity for academic achievement, including, when necessary, academic instruction using the primary language."

6. "It is the purpose of this article to require California school districts to offer bilingual learning opportunities to each pupil of limited English proficiency enrolled in the public schools...."
7. "It is the purpose of this article to require California school districts ...to provide adequate supplemental financial support to achieve [the purpose set forth in 6]."
8. "Insofar as the individual pupil is concerned, participation in bilingual programs is voluntary on the part of the parent or guardian."

State Board of Education Guidance. Based upon the provisions of federal and state law, the State Board of Education hereby establishes two goals which the State Board urges all school districts to achieve through educational programs and services for English learners.

- Rapid development of English language proficiency (literacy), including speaking, reading, and writing.
- Opportunity to learn, including access to a challenging core curriculum and access to primary language development.

Principles for Educational Programs and Services for English Learners. The State Board of Education hereby establishes five principles relating to educational programs and services for English learners.

- Maximum local flexibility to determine which instructional programs and methodologies best achieve results.
- Instructional programs based on sound educational theory, emphasizing that local programs may include primary language instruction, English language development through "sheltered" content instruction, and/or other sound instructional methodologies.
- Adequate resources and personnel to implement local plans and programs.
- Parent involvement, including parental consent for placement of their children in programs for English learners and the providing of materials to parents to support their children's education actively.
- Due process in all compliance matters.

AB 955: BILINGUAL EDUCATION

AUTHOR: Knight

BILL HISTORY

1996

Feb. 6 Referred to Com. on ED.
Jan. 31 In Senate. Read first time. To Com. on RLS. for assignment.
Jan. 30 Read third time, passed, and to Senate. (Ayes 41. Noes 37.)
Jan. 29 Read second time. To third reading.
Jan. 25 From committee: Do pass. (Ayes 11. Noes 7.) (January 24).
Jan. 22 Re-referred to Com. on APPR.
Jan. 18 Read second time and amended.
Jan. 17 From committee: Amend, do pass as amended, and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 9. Noes 6.) (January 10).
Jan. 8 Re-referred to Com. on ED.
Jan. 3 From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to Com. on ED. Read second time and amended.

1995

Apr. 5 In committee: Set, first hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of author.
Mar. 6 Referred to Com. on ED.
Feb. 24 From printer. May be heard in committee March 26.
Feb. 22 Read first time. To print.

AMENDED 01/18/96

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JANUARY 18, 1996

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JANUARY 3, 1996

INTRODUCED BY Assembly Member Knight

An act to repeal and add Article 3 (commencing with Section 52160) of Chapter 7 of Part 28 of the Education Code, relating to bilingual education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

(1) Existing law, which became inoperative on June 30, 1987, establishes the Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act of 1976. Existing law specifies that if the Legislature does not enact legislation to continue that act, among other acts, the funding for the bilingual-bicultural program shall continue for the general purposes of the program. The act specifies that its purposes are to require school districts to offer bilingual learning opportunities to each pupil of limited English proficiency enrolled

in the public schools and to provide adequate supplemental financial support to achieve that goal.

This bill would repeal the Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act of 1976 and would enact the Equal Opportunity English Acquisition Act. The bill would require a school district to develop educational strategies that prepare limited-English-proficient pupils to be academically successful in classrooms in which instruction is designed for English proficient pupils. These strategies would be known as the district's English acquisition program.

This bill would require, as specified, each school district to conduct a census of pupils of limited English proficiency which would consist of a count of the total number of limited-English-proficient pupils within the district, their classification according to primary language, age, and grade level, a determination of the primary language of each pupil enrolled in the district, and an assessment of the English and native language skills of limited-English-proficient pupils. The results of the census would be reported annually, as specified, to the State Department of Education. Parents and guardians of limited-English-proficient pupils would be provided with a consultation regarding recommended instructional services and would have the opportunity to decline placement in the English acquisition program or to withdraw a pupil from the program.

This bill would require the State Department of Education to develop standardized tests that measure English competency and academic readiness to participate in a classroom in which instruction is designed for English proficient pupils. The bill would require a school district to test annually each limited-English-proficient pupil who is enrolled in the English acquisition program to determine whether the pupil should be enrolled in a classroom in which instruction is designed for English proficient pupils.

This bill would require a school district to devise a remedial education program for limited-English-proficient pupils who after being enrolled in the district's English acquisition program for 3 years are not ready to participate in a classroom in which instruction is designed for English proficient pupils. The bill would require a school district to establish an advisory committee on English acquisition which would develop and implement this remedial education program. A school, as specified, would be required to establish a committee of school personnel that includes at least {- two -} {+ 2 +} parent representatives to develop a plan for remedial services.

This bill would also specify that a school district's categorical funding for the English acquisition program would be based on the number of limited-English-proficient pupils enrolled in the district whether those pupils are enrolled in the English acquisition program or the academic program designed for English proficient pupils.

This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to provide an equal, nonsegregated education for all pupils.

To the extent the duties imposed upon school districts by this bill exceed the requirements of federal law, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

AB 2310: BILINGUAL EDUCATION

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 8, 1996

INTRODUCED BY Assembly Member Firestone February 15, 1996

BILL HISTORY

1996

Apr. 15	From committee: Do pass, and re-refer to Com. on APPR. Re-referred. (Ayes 9. Noes 3.) (April 10).
Apr. 10	Re-referred to Com. on ED.
Apr. 8	From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to Com. on ED. Read second time and amended.
Feb. 29	Referred to Com. on ED.
Feb. 16	From printer. May be heard in committee March 17.
Feb. 15	Read first time. To print.

An act to amend Sections Section 44253.1 and 44253.10 of, to add Section 51207 to, to repeal and add Article 3 (commencing with Section 52160) of Chapter 7 of Part 28 of, and to repeal Article 4 (commencing with Section 52180) of Chapter 7 of Part 28 of, the Education Code, relating to bilingual education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2310, as amended, Firestone. Bilingual education.

(1) Existing law expresses the Legislature's findings regarding the needs of California school pupils whose primary language is not English, and the Legislature's intent that the Commission on Teacher Credentialing implement an assessment system to certify those teachers who have the essential skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of California's limited-English-proficient pupils.

This bill would delete this existing statement of intent and instead make new findings and declare it is critical to the future success of English learner pupils that California's teachers be familiar with the variety of academically accepted methods of teaching English to English learner pupils.

(2) Existing law provides conditions for teachers with a basic teaching credential to provide specially designed content instruction delivered in English to limited-English-proficient pupils.

This bill would make specified changes to these conditions and replace the term "limited-English-proficient" with "English learner."

(3) Existing law, which is presently inoperative, establishes the Bilingual-Bicultural Act of 1976, and specifies that the purpose of the act is to require school districts to offer bilingual learning opportunities to each pupil of limited English proficiency enrolled in the public schools. Existing law also provides for a State Bilingual Teacher Training Assistance Program to provide training for teachers under bilingual teacher waivers.

This bill would repeal both acts and would establish a new program of instructional services for English learners. The bill would define an "English learner" to be a pupil who does not have the communication and academic skills necessary to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English. The bill would require the State Board of Education to develop guidelines for school districts to use in ascertaining the number of "English learners," their classification, and procedures for parents to appeal a determination their child is an "English learner." The bill would require the governing board of the school district to notify the parent or guardian of an "English learner" of, among other things, the results of the assessment and the purpose, structure, and methods of the instructional services that will be offered. The bill would require the school district to provide the parent or guardian of a pupil who has been determined to have a primary language other than English with an opportunity for consultation regarding the recommended instructional services. The bill would permit, on or after July 1, 1997, a parent or guardian to request his or her child be removed from any class that is not taught entirely substantially in the English language, and to have the child placed in a comparable class taught only substantially in English. The bill would require each school district to develop instructional services to best accomplish the goals of English language development for "English learners," and for would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to

make available materials for school districts to use in selecting the appropriate instructional program for their "English learners." The bill would require each school district to determine the method of, or approach to, instructing "English learners," as defined, that the district will adopt in order to ensure timely transition into classes taught in English and in order to provide each pupil with an equal opportunity for academic achievement, and to enable each pupil to acquire the knowledge and skills to successfully compete in the work force and to actively participate in a democratic culture. The bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish a statewide advisory committee to offer non-binding recommendations to individual school districts regarding the instructional program the school district selects to teach English learners. The bill would require teachers of English learners to hold a valid California Teaching Credential, and meet other staff development criteria. The bill would authorize the establishment of school and require the establishment of district advisory committees, as specified, to advise the school administration and the governing board of the school district, respectively, on all aspects of instructional services for "English learners." This bill would require the State Department of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, to develop minimum pupil performance and achievement standards for "English learners," for use by school districts, as specified, and require the State Board of Education to approve revisions to a school district's English learner program when a specified number of English learners in a school district fail to make progress toward meeting the standards by a specified time.

This bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction, with the approval of the State Board of Education, to prescribe methods by which each school district would be required to conduct, as specified, a census of pupils of limited English proficiency by ascertaining their actual total number within the district, classifying them according to primary language, age, and grade level, and assessing the language skills of all pupils whose primary language is a language other than English. The bill would permit as part of the census the classroom teacher to prepare a written evaluation of the language skills of each pupil when the teacher determines the written evaluation to be necessary, and require that primary language determination unless appealed by a parent or guardian would only be required once. The bill would require each school district to report the results of the census to the State Department of Education which would review the results and audit the census if the accuracy of the census is questioned, as specified.

By imposing additional requirements on school districts, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(4) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates

Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

AB 1041: BILINGUAL EDUCATION

AUTHOR: Alpert

BILL HISTORY

1995

- June 27 From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to committee. Read second time, amended, and re-referred to Com. on ED.
- June 21 In committee: Set, first hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of author.
- June 6 Referred to Com. on ED.
- June 5 In Senate. Read first time. To Com. on RLS. for assignment.
- June 2 Read third time, passed, and to Senate. (Ayes 43. Noes 29. Page 1983.)
- June 1 Read second time. To third reading.
- May 31 From committee: Do pass. (Ayes 10. Noes 1.) (May 31).
- May 26 Joint Rule 61 suspended.
- May 24 In committee: Set, first hearing. Referred to APPR. suspense file.
- Apr. 20 From committee: Do pass, and re-refer to Com. on APPR. Re-referred. (Ayes 12. Noes 1.) (April 19).
- Apr. 5 In committee: Set, first hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of author.
- Mar. 6 Referred to Com. on ED.
- Feb. 24 From printer. May be heard in committee March 26.
- Feb. 23 Read first time. To print.

AMENDED in Senate 06/27/95

INTRODUCED BY Assembly Member Alpert FEBRUARY 23, 1995

An act to repeal and add Article 3 (commencing with Section 52160) of add Article 5 (commencing with Section 52187) and Article 6 (commencing with Section 52195) to +} Chapter 7 of Part 28 of the Education Code, relating to bilingual education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

(1) Existing law, which is presently inoperative, establishes the Bilingual-Bicultural Act of 1976, and specifies that the purpose of the act is to require school districts to offer bilingual learning opportunities to each pupil of limited English proficiency enrolled in the public schools.

This bill would authorize a school district to provide innovative instructional services to limited-English-proficient pupils using any instructional methodology selected by the district, as specified. The bill would require the school district to submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for approval, as specified, a district plan, developed and approved as specified, that contains a clear statement of the purposes, goals, and projected outcomes of the innovative instructional services program and that documents that the program is specially designed to develop as effectively as possible English language skills and to further a pupil's knowledge of the core academic subject areas; that the district has services, policies, and resources in place that can support the implementation of the chosen educational methodology; that the district has an ongoing assessment process to evaluate the effectiveness of the program; and that the district has devoted to its program an adequate number of qualified instructors. The bill would require a school district to provide parents and guardians with a written description of the program in English and primary language of the pupil and to receive consent from the parent or guardian before enrolling any pupil in the program. The bill would provide that an innovative instructional services program may be approved for a maximum of 5 years, after which a successfully operated program could be expanded, as specified, if certain criteria are met.

This bill would repeal that act. The bill would require the State Department of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, to develop minimum pupil performance and achievement standards for limited-English-proficient pupils, for use by school districts, as specified. The bill would require each school district to develop a plan for meeting those standards and to review annually the performance of each limited-English-proficient pupil, as specified. The bill would require each school district to determine the method of, or approach to, instructing limited-English-proficient pupils, as defined, that the district will adopt in order to develop English language proficiency and academic achievement of those pupils, as specified.

This bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction, with the approval of the State Board of Education to prescribe methods by which each school district would be required to conduct, as specified, a census of pupils of limited

English proficiency by ascertaining their total number within the district, classifying them according to primary language, age, and grade level, and assessing the language skills of all pupils whose primary language is a language other than English. The bill would require each school district to report the results of this census to the Department of Education which would review the results and audit the census if the accuracy of the census is questioned, as specified.

This bill would require the governing board of the school district to notify the parent or guardian of a limited-English-proficient pupil of, among other things, the results of the assessment and the purpose, structure, and methods of the recommended instructional services. The bill would require the school district to provide the parent or guardian of a pupil who has been determined to have a primary language other than English with an opportunity for consultation regarding the recommended instructional services.

This bill would authorize the establishment of school and district advisory committees, as specified, to advise the school administration and the governing board of the school district, respectively, on all aspects of instructional services for limited-English-proficient pupils.

By imposing additional requirements on school districts, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions. -}

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

80 STUDENTS STAY OUT OF SCHOOL IN LATINO BOYCOTT; PROTEST: PARENTS SEEK MORE ENGLISH-ONLY CLASSES AT NINTH STREET ELEMENTARY CAMPUS.

Copyright 1996 The Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times, February 14, 1996
By Amy Pyle, Times Education Writer

Abigail Ramirez was one of more than 80 children kept out of downtown's Ninth Street School by Latino parents Tuesday in a protest against bilingual education, and she wanted to talk about why.

My mom is worried because she wants that I speak English and do right my work," the fourth-grader said, taking a break from making a valentine at Las Familias del Pueblo, the skid row community center where the boycott was organized.

It is just such persistent difficulty with the English language -- particularly with reading and writing -- that led 63 parents to endorse the strike after a series of letters, verbal requests and parent petitions demanding English-only classes produced no results.

By state law, immigrant parents must be offered English-as-a-second-language instruction for their children. Los Angeles Unified School District Supt. Sid Thompson said he was meeting with bilingual administrators Tuesday and again today "to make sure that option is being offered in this case."

However, the striking parents want more than high-level meetings about

them. They vowed to continue the boycott today after the principal and the school board president declined hand-delivered invitations to meet them Wednesday night.

"What an inappropriate response from a public agency," said Las Familias Director Alice Callaghan. "They work for the children. They seem to have forgotten that."

Every missed school day costs the district state funding, which is calculated on average daily attendance. State Department of Education officials estimated that each absent student represents about \$20 -- or about \$1,600 a day for the Ninth Street strikers.

Board President Mark Slavkin said he was dismayed that students were being held out of school, but believed that the dispute should be handled at the campus level.

"I don't want to reinforce the idea that this is about going up the chain of command," he said.

Ninth Street Principal Eleanor Vargas Page said she would prefer that protesting parents come to the regular monthly parent meeting -- scheduled Thursday evening at the school -- so that "all of our parents . . . have the

same information and accurate information."

Vargas Page said she was perplexed by the protest because only four parents applied for English-only instruction this year, and three were granted it. About 90% of Ninth Street's students do not speak English, but fewer than a fifth are in English-based classes full time.

Many of the boycotting parents said they never applied to change their child's program because they felt intimidated by the school bureaucracy. Instead, they took their concerns to Callaghan, they said, because they were more comfortable acting as a group.

Ninth Street officials portray their approach to native-language instruction as more liberal than that of many district schools.

A recently revised class schedule shows that 90% of the school day is spent in English, though a closer look indicates that the English category includes recess and homeroom.

At the campus Tuesday, the contrast between the perspectives of the school and the protesting parents was stark.

Assistant Principal Oscar Kreis cleared a path to the side gate for entering students as about three dozen protesters passed out leaflets, entitled "Padres" -- Parents.

"This is a pet peeve of one person," Kreis said, referring to Callaghan. "We have 150 parents show up for parent

meetings, and none of them have ever complained about this."

Yet at least six additional parents took their children home after reading the leaflet Tuesday, while many others agreed to attend Wednesday's meeting.

"Nearly all the parents here say the same thing as these parents," parent Vicky Valdez said in Spanish. "We are afraid to speak up, we Latinos -- that's the truth. But once we hear someone saying what we believe, we will join in."

A few blocks away at Las Familias, pandemonium reigned. The din of children's voices filled the center as students played table pool, worked jigsaw puzzles and constructed a Lego house.

The arrival of each member of the media sent a wave of excitement through the center, and most reporters left with a glitter-laden valentine crafted just for them.

Despite Callaghan's promise that the children would spend the day speaking English, the lack of formal instruction made fulfillment impossible. But here and there, efforts were made.

Volunteer teacher Lydia Lopez, a member of the Las Familias board, sat in a corner helping children thread string through sewing cards. She only gave them the card of their choice if they identified it in English.

"Do you want to play with us?" Lopez asked, speaking slowly. "Which card would you like?"

SPANISH PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN SPEAKS VOLUMES

Copyright 1996 The Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times, February 10, 1996
By Christina Lima, Times Staff Writer

When it was time for Cheryl Scott to send her son Robert to kindergarten, the Santa Paula resident faced a choice: Place the youngster in an English-speaking classroom where he would learn in his first — and only — language, or enroll him in a Spanish-language program where he would learn a new language.

Setting aside her fears that Robert would fall behind in English, Scott enrolled him in the Spanish-speaking class.

Now five years later, Robert, whose first three years in school were taught in Spanish, is the only person in his family who is bilingual, and he is doing better academically than his two siblings who attend a regular classroom.

"This has been one of the best things I did for Robert," Scott said. "He speaks Spanish without a trace of accent, and that has boosted his self-esteem and motivated him in school."

Scott is one of about 100 parents who have enrolled their children in a two-way intensive language program at Glen City School in Santa Paula.

Students who have remained in the program since its inception have academic skills equal to or above their peers in a regular classroom.

The program, also known as Spanish Immersion, was implemented five years ago and is the only one of its kind in Ventura County, said Cliff Rodrigues, director of bilingual education for the county superintendent of schools office.

Since the program began, about 30 students at kindergarten age have enrolled in the dual-language classes every year.

A recent study of students who have remained in the program

since its inception shows that their academic skills are either equal to or above those of their peers who attend a regular classroom. The report also showed that students in the program are fluent or nearly fluent in both languages.

"The program has been very successful," said Larry Salmon, who conducted the study. "We are very pleased with the results we have seen so far, and our goal is to continue offering this opportunity to our students."

About 180 students are now involved in the program, but the study involved only eight who have been in the Spanish Immersion classrooms since the program's first year. Some of the original students have moved out of the city and others have been removed from the program by parents.

The school launched the program shortly after the school district made Glen City into its multicultural magnet school, Principal David Luna said.

The goal of the program is to instill in youngsters an understanding of different cultures and provide them with the opportunity to grow up bilingual, Luna said.

"We are thrilled with the learning opportunities our magnet school offers," Luna said. "It's a tremendous advantage to have a global world view and bilingualism really facilitates that."

Before starting the program, several administrators and teachers visited schools in Los Angeles County where children were enrolled in a two-way intensive language program.

At Glen City, students are taught in Spanish from kindergarten to the end of the second grade in every academic subject. At the beginning of the third

grade, classes are primarily in English with some Spanish, Salmon said. Most of the children involved speak Spanish as their first language, but each class has a few English speakers.

One of the main concerns of parents is fear that the youngsters will have difficulties catching up with English skills, Salmon said. "However, kids have shown to have no problems learning how to read and write in English after they have learned Spanish," Salmon said. "We were really surprised how quick most children switched from Spanish to English."

Indeed, a study of the eight students who have completed four years in the program showed they achieved above grade-level status in both reading

and math classes taught in English, Salmon said.

For Antonio Banuelos, 10, whose first language is English, the classroom transition from Spanish to English was easy.

"I had no problems at all," Antonio said. "Now I think both in Spanish and English, and I like both languages a lot."

Scott said she has been so pleased with the program that two years ago she enrolled her youngest daughter, Jennifer, 7.

"What I regret is that my older children did not have this opportunity," Scott said, referring to her two sons, one now in middle school and another in high school. "It's just too late for them to learn another language at their age."

PANEL WANTS TO MUTE BILINGUAL PROGRAM AT DOUGLASS JR. HIGH

The Sacramento Bee - March 30, 1995

Author: Mickey Marchello Neighbors staff writer

The president of the Bilingual Advisory Committee at Woodland's Douglass Junior High School wants to eliminate the school's bilingual program.

"It's just not effective," said Miguel Angel Fernandez, who wants bilingual education students moved into more classes that serve the general school population. "The way bilingual

education has come about, it's not in the best interests of our children.

"If we want to maintain our culture, we can do that at home or in the community. It segregates students."

The committee, a six-member group of parents whose children attend Douglass, meets once a month to discuss bilingual education issues and to make suggestions to school administrators. Fernandez is in his first year on the board. "We're just voicing the concerns of parents," he said. The entire committee is in agreement with Fernandez on wanting changes in how students are educated, he added.

And school administrators say they agree with the committee and Fernandez.

"We're in perfect agreement," said Patrick McDougall, Douglass principal. "We're headed in the same direction."

McDougall said he is working toward moving limited-English-proficiency students from their "sheltered instruction courses" into mainstream classes by next year.

"Sheltered instruction courses are the exact same content as other classes, but have teachers trained in strategies taking into account the needs of limited English proficiency students," McDougall said.

English as a Second Language programs began about nine years ago at Douglass, McDougall said, "to provide a little bit of a support system for the kids.

"Is it possible to allow these students to come out of the sheltered classes and be in mainstream?" he asked. His plan is to use the sheltered course teachers in the mainstream classes. Those teachers are specially trained to use more visual aids and other teaching cues to assist students.

The shift to move those students into mainstream classes isn't unusual or specific to Douglass Junior High School, McDougall said. With the state cutting programs, there's less funding available. The direction from the federal government is to move sheltered students into mainstream classes without going back to the sink-or-swim strategy, he added.

"We don't have any concerns about what's being taught in the educational end of it," Fernandez said. "I don't believe the standards are the same. I don't believe the students are challenged equally in the bilingual program as they are in the regular program.

"(The committee) wants Mexican-American children to be proud they are American citizens," said Fernandez, who immigrated to the United States from Mexico almost 29 years ago. He grew up in Clarksburg, graduated with honors from high school and attended the University of California, Berkeley, studying chemical engineering.

"He's really advocating 'sink-or-swim,'" McDougall said of Fernandez's suggestion to use the teaching technique that 20 years ago

placed a foreign student in a regular classroom with no specialized instruction. With that technique, the student either succeeds or drops back, if not out.

"There was a high casualty rate back then," McDougall said.

"Why are they thinking we can't do that now?" Fernandez said.

But the harsh reality is that only about three out of every 10 students would be able to survive without the sheltered course curriculum currently offered, according to Patricia Ayala, the bilingual coordinator at Douglass.

"Without formal education in their country and putting them in English-only classes, it's sink or swim," Ayala said. "Most of them sink.

"I do believe that putting them in one classroom is not good," she said, because the regular teachers are not trained specifically to teach English as a Second Language students.

Douglass started the school year with 152 students classified as having limited proficiency in English. As of last week, there were 117 students still in the program.

According to the Yolo County Board of Education, county schools received about \$1.9 million in state and federal funding for the bilingual education and limited-English-proficiency programs for the 1993-94 fiscal year.

"The funding won't be cut if we go to more mainstream classes," McDougall said. However, the school will receive less funding as it moves students from traditional bilingual classes to mainstream classes, he said.

Ayala said the school will buy materials and train teachers with the funding. "A lot of that money goes to buying materials for the entire school."

"I have not heard one single objection from a parent to what we're supporting right now," said Fernandez, who also advocates pushing Republican legislators to wield the funding ax immediately.

"If hard-core Republicans are really sincere in mainstreaming everyone, they'll have to cut the funding," he said. "It may take the grass-roots level to get this going.

STATE BOARD OKS ENGLISH-ONLY TEACHING IN WESTMINSTER

Copyright 1996 The Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times, February 10, 1996
By Eric Bailey

The State Board of Education agreed Friday to let the Westminster School District instruct its multiethnic mix of students in English only, while increasing the use of bilingual teaching aides.

The board's unanimous vote, which came despite criticism from advocates of traditional bilingual education, marked the first test of a new state policy giving schools more latitude to abandon native language instruction. A board committee had approved the arrangement Thursday.

Backers of bilingual education argue that Westminster's plan will hurt students struggling to keep up with English-speaking peers while learning a new language. They contend that a child's academic progress could be eroded by poor translation or other problems with bilingual aides thrust into the role of surrogate teachers.

The district is currently providing bilingual education -- under which children are instructed in their native languages while being tutored in English -- to just 60 of its more than 4,000 students who speak little or no English. The rest are taught all subjects in English.

School officials in Westminster, which has large Vietnamese- and Spanish-speaking populations, say they simply have been unable to recruit enough certified bilingual teachers to comply with state rules.

District officials believe immersion in an English-speaking classroom will help nonnative speakers more quickly develop fluency. Under the program, which the state will review after a 22-month trial, bilingual teaching assistants will be required to pass reading, writing and oral tests in both English and a second language.

APPLIED LINGUISTICS: FOR IMMIGRANT STUDENTS, BILINGUAL PROGRAM IS A PATH TO SUCCESS

Copyright 1995 The Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times, October 29, 1995
By John M. Glionna, Times Staff Writer

Pavel Markovsky felt incredibly alone.

Like a child living out some fantastic dream, he walked shyly through a crowded Reseda High School hallway jammed with swarthy and blond-headed boys hugging their girlfriends and high-fiving cronies, all pushing their way brusquely past.

This was Ground Zero for the Russian-born teen, the dreaded first day as an out-sider at a new high school. But for Markovsky, the almost unendurable torture of this first morning didn't stop there. It wasn't just the faces that were new, or the classes or even the eye-popping, rap-music-inspired American teen-age culture.

It was the seemingly insurmountable language barrier: Pavel mouthed only a few halting English phrases. His family had arrived from the Ukraine just three weeks ago and now this awkward-looking 15-year-old was set to begin the academic and linguistic odyssey of the Los Angeles

Unified School District's bilingual education program.

Pavel blinked his eyes. "It's very frustrating," he said in faltering English, sneaking a glance at the passing students around him. "Very frustrating."

With any luck, between two and six years from now, teachers and administrators hope Pavel will turn out like David Guillen, a 17-year-old from Guatemala. Or Kira Krupovlyanskaya, a teen from Uzbekistan in the former Soviet Union. Or young Claudia Medina from El Salvador. None could speak a word of English when they arrived from their homelands a few years ago.

Today, all three are graduates of the district's controversial bilingual education program, and all are well-adjusted, nearly straight-A students considering colleges and careers.

For years, classes such as math and science have been taught in a student's native tongue, while the student

also took English courses. This is a method that detractors say should be abandoned in favor of full immersion in English-only classes.

As bilingual education continues to be a lightning rod for debate, thousands of students across Los Angeles are transferring out of the program at a faster rate than ever, a recent school district report said.

The study showed English acquisition of L.A. Unified's non-native speakers has improved markedly over the last year, even as the number of such pupils ballooned to more than 292,000 districtwide. In the 1994-95 school year, 24,000 students were transferred out of the bilingual program and into mainstream classes, a 2% rise over the year before.

Still, for many of these impressionable foreign-born teens, the passage through the bilingual program is about far more than just learning English. It gives students the feeling of not fitting in at precisely the

time in their lives when not standing out is an emotional imperative.

When they ultimately cross that linguistic border into English-only classes, many face cruel laughter and mimicry as they mispronounce words while reading aloud. They face indecisive moments of knowing an answer but not raising their hand solely because they are unsure of their English.

For others, graduating from the program is a liberation from slow-moving classes shared with newcomers who speak one of 37 foreign languages at Reseda — students with whom they share little other than an inability to speak textbook English.

There are also perils in entering the mainstream waters of the Southern California high school. "Most of what I remember are the faces of other students in class looking at me like I was dumb," said Guillen, who also speaks French and Russian and plans to become a doctor.

"They got mad when you didn't understand," he said. "Back then, I didn't know I could learn a language so easily. I liked English. And I learned it fast."

But on this day, Pavel Markovsky was in no mood to ponder what will certainly be the good, the bad and the ugly aspects of acquiring English as a second language.

During his first day at school, he sat stiffly and alone at a table in the school's bilingual office, taking tests to determine his Russian and English comprehension.

The exams were administered by 19-year-old Claudia Romero, a Reseda graduate-turned teacher's assistant, who just six years ago sat in the very same chair as Pavel, taking the same tests, as a new arrival from Mexico.

"I know how he feels — all alone," she said, glancing over at Pavel with a look of empathy. "I remember this day all too well. All you want to do is go home. But it gets better. He just doesn't know that right now."

David Guillen was a 1990s version of an 1890s immigrant. He was a 15-year-old Central American who arrived with his mother and four sisters — as he recalls — a young sponge ready to absorb his new culture. His family moved into a house across the

street from Reseda High and Guillen remembers gazing over at the campus with curiosity, excitement. And fear.

He liked school. But his English boiled down to one word: Hello.

The next day he was attending classes in which his native Spanish was spoken in complicated classes such as math and science. But he was also taking classes in English as a second language — the start of a program that would slowly meld his fledgling English into his high school course work.

In successive semesters Guillen and others would begin taking courses taught in so-called sheltered English, where teachers painstakingly pursued lessons using hand motions and charts. Finally, depending on their ability, motivation and reinforcement from home, students like Guillen must pass a final battery of exams before graduating from the program.

But for newcomer Guillen, those tests seemed light years away on those first days. He walked the halls hearing a melodic new language that sounded like a combination of French

and Spanish. But the words didn't make sense.

There he was in his physical education class, following instructions in a language that might as well have been Martian. "You just went along with what the other kids were doing," he recalled. "If you were lucky, someone who spoke Spanish would translate for you."

Kira Krupovlyanskaya wasn't so lucky: Unlike Guillen, she didn't have the luxury of hundreds of fellow students who spoke her native language. Almost nobody spoke Russian.

On her first day, as she sat glumly in the bilingual office, an understanding teacher produced one fellow student who spoke her language. "I remember thinking 'Yes! Russian!' It was so comforting to hear. I had this image of being totally alone in the classroom with everyone speaking a language I couldn't understand."

Ironically, students and teachers say, having a wealth of other students around who speak their native tongue makes it harder on newcomers to buckle down on their English.

"It's easier if there is no one around who speaks your language. That way you're forced to speak English," Guillen recalled. "For me, it was too easy to lapse into my Spanish. Outside my English classes, I could have spoken Spanish all the time if I wanted to."

While neither his mother nor his four sisters spoke English, Guillen found ways to immerse himself in his new second language. After school, he walked his neighborhood reading street signs, picking up comic books, flyers -- anything written in English. Using a dogeared dictionary, he translated copious lists of words he couldn't understand.

Soon he began noticing things: Why did English-speaking kids always say 'OK' at the end of every sentence? And how could he ever learn all the idioms, phrases like 'Just kidding.' How could something be 'pretty ugly'? Why did people drive on parkways and park on driveways?

Krupovlyanskaya too, struggled with the language at first. She got some help from the handful of other Russian-speaking students. But at home with her homework, she was all alone.

She watched TV after school for English pointers.

Later, she got a part-time job at a Pizza Hut, practicing her English comprehension by taking orders over the telephone. Still, she found herself translating all the instructions on algebra homework into Russian before she could even begin to work on the problems.

"It wasn't a matter of just speaking, I could say words," recalled the teen-ager with shoulder-length blond hair, blue jeans and turquoise earrings, who wants to be a stockbroker. "It was putting thoughts together into sentences, being able to say what was on my mind."

Kira had extra motivation: Her parents both gave up good-paying jobs back home in Russia so she could have the advantages of an American education. "I knew it was my obligation to do well, to repay them," she said. "I knew I had to study in order to be somebody."

Guillen and Krupovlyanskaya each sailed through the bilingual program in two years. It took Claudia Medina twice as long. But there was a time when she questioned the validity of

mastering her second language.

"During my second year in the bilingual program, my mother began asking me 'Why don't you speak more English?' I told her that it was too hard for me. I felt so stupid when I tried. All the while, I was asking myself 'Why do I have to speak English in the first place when Spanish is my first language?'"

Even after completing the bilingual program, her work wasn't over. Medina often found herself reluctant to raise her hand even when she knew the answers to questions for fear the teachers would not understand her accented English.

And then there were the English-speaking students to deal with: Medina often stumbled while reading aloud in class – too busy glancing ahead for words

she might mispronounce. When she did, the reaction was often the same – snickering. Even from U.S-born Latinos.

"I'd get this lump in my throat," she said. "When I get nervous, I can't talk English."

Guillen also heard the laughs. "Sometimes it got to you. When you don't know how to speak the language, your self-esteem starts to go. It happens to lots of immigrants. Kids who were bullies in their own countries change when they come here. They have less self-esteem."

Krupovlyanskaya's reaction was different: Let them laugh. She knew who she was and what she was trying to accomplish. But like the others, she found her life became easier as she slowly melted into the world of English-speaking

students, making new friends, maintaining old ones.

"Just like anything else, you get used to it," Kira said of her new academic life among native English speakers. "You know what you have to do and you do it."

Now Krupovlyanskaya and the others find themselves helping newcomers survive their first days in the English-speaking world. And for Kira, sometimes there's some doubt about whether it's Russian or English that's her second language.

"Now and then, I'll even forget Russian words," she said. "It's a strange thing, but sometimes it's easier to explain things in English than Russian. And I never dreamed that would happen."

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How much should educational research influence our decisions about bilingual education?
2. Do you think we should change our present programs? Why or why not?
3. If we need to change, which of the three bills would you support?
4. How would you change the bill you support?
5. Should students become truly "bilingual" or should we emphasize just their learning English?
6. Should parents have a say in what type of program they would like their children to be in? If so, how would you help them make a decision?
7. Do you wish you were bilingual? What would be the advantages/disadvantages for you?

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